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GREAT RALEGH

BY

HUGH DE SÉLINCOURT

1639

WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO

MURIEL LEE MATHEWS

High Cross

PREFACE

THIS book has been written for the general reader. Caveat scholasticus. My aim has been to make the character of Ralegh live again, and to draw a picture of the times in as lively a manner as I see it. England in Elizabeth's maturity touched greatness; in Elizabeth's old age and during the reign of King James, England declined. Ralegh embodied the greatest qualities of the great days, and survived to carry on the Elizabethan tradition when the great Elizabethans had passed away.

The books to which reference has been made are too many to need mention in a book of this kind: dramatists, poets, pamphleteers, memoirists have been freely pillaged. But I should like to acknowledge here my extreme indebtedness to the works of Major Martin Hume, Mr. T. N. Brushfield, and the late Mr. Edward Edwards, and to thank again Miss Janet Wheeler for her kind help, notably in that arduous task—the making of an Index.

H. DE S.

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GREAT RALEGH

CHAPTER I

BIRTH

The spread of news—Birth—Influence of birthplace—His father—His mother.

LIFE is a series of accidents more or less controlled; the play of circumstances upon character infinitely various and infinitely involved. Elizabethan life was superb for the reason that there were fewer men, and they had the immense advantage of realizing their power and of possessing scope for their energy. It was the age of discovery, not only of new lands, but of discovery in every branch of life. Now, a man may grow old before he has acquired an inkling of what has been found out, before he has read what has been written finely. The world stands at ease uneasily, and has time for shuffling and discontent. Vitality and opportunity then worked in wonderful harmony. We are not less vital, but our energy is apt to be stifled. Everything is so easy. We read day by day what has happened throughout the world. There is nothing surprising except our friends and ourselves—and they are apt to surprise us too much. Effort begets effort, and effort, strength. The Elizabethan, without railways, without posts, without telegraphs, was bound to rely upon himself for everything.

Man brought news to man by word of mouth, without warning or previous discussion, or the help of photography. An errand-boy can now know more easily what is happening in the whole world than a wise man could then know of what was happening in his county. You did not know of a battle till you saw the wounded fighters.

They were shut out from the outside world, and from time to time dramatically news fired their imagination and minds. And their minds were trained so that they did not gape and wonder. Their minds were stored with the wisdom of the Greeks and Romans, and were thrilled as only trained minds can be thrilled, and roused to a veritable storm of energy by the huge possibilities of life. The difficulties to be overcome were material and romantic, and triumphs were more easily attained. Life was as adventurous as the true tales of adventure that were circulated at every fireside.

Nowhere were these tales more frequent or fresher than near the great sea-ports in Devonshire, where Walter Ralegh was born. The farmhouse still stands, at Hayes, near Budleigh-Salterton. The country-side has remained strangely the same in its appearance, a little more populous, and, after waking to the arrival of trains, has sunk back to its long, prosperous sleep, contented. No longer do strange ships with stranger tidings disturb its rest; they are watched for and quietly expected; the sailors land to learn news, and can tell little but gossip in return. No longer do horses carry messengers on the Queen's service with packets marked "*Haste*," "*Post Haste*," "*For Life*," galloping to the Queen's Chief Secretary, in London.

News was spread slowly; its effect must have been incredibly impressive.

In the year 1552 Walter Ralegh was born. He was

the second son of his father's third wife, and so the universal accident of birth seems in his case to be intensified. It was the sixth year of Edward VI.'s reign, and an astrologer has noted that year as "a year remarkable in our chronicles, first, for that strange shoal of the largest sea-fishes which, quitting their native waters for fresh and untasted streams, wandered up the Thames so high, till the river no longer retained any brackishness; and, secondly, for that it is thought to have been somewhat stained in our annals with the blood of the noble Seymer, Duke of Somerset—events surprisingly analogous both to the life of this adventurous voyager, Sir Walter Ralegh, whose delight was in the hazardous discovery of unfrequented coasts, and also to his unfortunate death."

It is not possible to determine exactly the effect of these largest "sea fishes" on his after-life; their coming may have been mere coincidence, or it may have been that the same element of an unknown power that sent the fishes hurrying to untasted streams, made Ralegh restless as the fish. The point lends itself to straining by its nature, though it is staidly mentioned by the staid biographer who has been quoted.

The dominating influence of his life was not the date of his birth, but his birthplace in the quiet of the country, and yet within the easiest reach of the fabulous outside world. That influence cannot be exaggerated.

Old sailors, who, as young men, had sailed with Jaques Carthier, of St. Malo, must have stirred the boy's mind with the stories of their adventures up the river of Canada to Saguenay, where there was gold and silver and red copper; how they visited the town of Hochelaga, their captain very gorgeously attired; and how, when their guides had led them to the midst of the town, they

were saluted by the women first and then by the men; and a comedy was rehearsed for their amusement until, borne on ten men's shoulders, Agouhanna, the lord and king of the country, wearing the skins of red hedgehogs in place of a crown, was brought in and placed by the side of their captain, on a great stag's skin; and how their captain, seeing the people's misery, read them in a loud, clear voice the first chapter of St. John's Gospel. Tales, too, young Ralegh would hear of other wild men and of their prodigious wealth, which they knew not the value of; of rubies and of pearls bartered for iron and toys; of the great creatures morses or sea-oxen, "which fish is very big, and hath two great teeth, and the skinne of them is like Buffe's leather, and they will not go away from their young ones." And at Bristol was living Mr. Alexander Woodson, an excellent mathematician and skilful physician, and he, writes Hakluyt, "shewed me one of these beast's teeth which were brought from the isle of Ramea in the first prize, which was half a yard long or very little less; and assured mee that he had made tryall of it in ministring medicine to his patients, and had found it as soveraigne against poyson as any Unicornes horne."

With only a little less eagerness and a wiser discrimination between fact and fable would the elders of the great Devonshire families, with many of whom the Raleghs were connected, hear the news and plan schemes for outwitting their rivals on the sea—the Spaniards—and perhaps foresee the great part their sons would play in gaining for their country prestige in this unclosing of the outside world. They would spare no pains to make the youngsters worthy to carry on the great tradition of Devonshire gentlemen under the splendid new conditions, which were daily becoming more apparent.

A fine stock were the Devonshire gentlemen who watched over the years of Walter Ralegh's boyhood, whetting no doubt by their interest his keenness in Latin and Greek, in fencing and riding, and training his knowledge of men. Among the Gilberts and Champernounes and Raleghs and Carews, there would be men as skilful in the handling of a ship as in the proper management of a farm, and to all would young Ralegh listen with his mind feverishly alert for information, and from all he would learn what each could teach him.

Old John Hooker, who lived at Exeter, and helped to write the continuation of Holinshed's chronicle, knew the boy and took an interest in him; as is easy to see from his proud reference to the Raleghs' illustrious descent—royal even he would have it in despite of Sir William Pole—and from his fine warning to young Ralegh when he was emerging into distinction to remain worthy of it. "These all," he writes, "were men of great honour and nobility whose virtues are highly recorded sparsim in the Chronicles of England. But yet, as nothing is permanent in this life and all things variable under the sun, and Time hath devoured and consumed greatest men and mightiest monarchs and most noble communities in the world—according to the old country saying, 'Be the day never so long, yet at length it will ring to even-song'—so this honourable race . . . continued in great honour, nobility and reputation, yet in process of time seemed at length to be buried in oblivion.

"Now it hath pleased God to raise the same even from the dead. . . . And whereof cometh this that the Lord hath so blessed you, but only that you should be beneficial and profitable to all men?" And he ends his discourse, in which a note of almost fatherly concern is heard, with an apt euphuism about the bee, to clinch his

argument and perhaps to show his knowledge of courtly style (did not he too go to London as member for Exeter?) "As the bee is no longer suffered to have a place in the hive than whiles he worketh, no more is that man to have place in the public weal than whiles he doth some good therein."

His father, too, was a man to know and appreciate his son's worth. He had led no uneventful life, though he was, for the most part, sequestered in the country. He took a leading part in the affairs of the little town of Budleigh-Salterton. In the great Rising of the West, in 1549, he came perilously near to losing his life. He was riding with some mariners from Hayes to Exeter, when he came upon an old woman telling her beads; he stopped to ask her why she defied authority by telling beads, and the old woman, furious, rushed into the church of Clyst St. Mary, and inveighed against the gentlemen who would burn the houses of poor folk over their heads. Ralegh had ridden on towards Exeter; a body of insurgents overtook him, and he was saved from being murdered only by hastening into a chapel by the roadside. But he went on his way again, and again fell into the hands of the rebels; and this time he did not manage to escape, but was shut up in the tower of a church at St. Sidwell's—a suburb of Exeter in the hands of the rebels—until Lord Grey of Wilton won the great battle of Clyst Heath, in which four thousand perished, and relieved the siege of Exeter. The incident serves to show the calibre of the father.

But when young Ralegh was a boy, his father's adventurous days were over; and in 1561 he is mentioned as churchwarden of East Budleigh parish, and no doubt led his family regularly each Sunday to the family pew, on which the family arms are still discernible,

THE BIRTHPLACE OF SIR WALTER RALEGH, BUDLEIGH, SALTERTON

Philip of Spain was powerful in England), and conversed with her before she was burned at the stake on Southernhay. "Mistress Ralegh came home to her husband and declared to him that in her life she never heard any woman, of such simplicity to see, to talk so godly and so earnestly; insomuch that if God were not with her she could not speak such things. I was not able to answer her: I, who can read, and she cannot."

The story does not relate what answer Mistress Ralegh wanted to give; it does not necessarily show her a Catholic in sympathy, though she probably did not sympathize with Agnes Prest's desire for martyrdom, and wanted to prevent the old woman from losing her life in such a terrible way. The story illustrates how inextricably religion was bound up with patriotism, and what a quandary the ordinary peace-loving gentlefolk, whose wish was to serve God and their country, must have been in, when the interests of either changed with the sovereign. That was why Elizabeth, by her policy of gradually cutting the ties that linked England to the Pope and the countries under his authority, gave such immense strength to the English; she united, as it were, the strength drawn from patriotism and the strength drawn from religion, by forcing England to rely on herself alone; and so she overcame the countries weakened by the constant antagonism between the welfare of their religion and the welfare of their state. She saw, as her father Henry had seen, the value of religion as a political asset; and with cold common sense she used that asset for all its peculiar worth. Her policy is more praiseworthy than her religion. Never was woman less religious; few women have been dowered with her statecraft. Religion and patriotism became practically identical: their interests were no longer conflicting.

The Pope and his followers became, for adventurous Englishmen, comfortingly akin to the devil and the devil's workers, to have at whom has always been the privilege of good men since the world began. Moreover, in this case the powers of evil were wealthy and pompous, but unwarlike; and wealth is a pleasant perquisite to virtue.

The time did not lend itself to contemplation. There was too much to be done. It was a time of action. The material world, with all its tremendous possibilities, was opening out before the astonished gaze of Englishmen, and left but little time for the exploration of the spiritual world. Men of action and men of art passed on their way triumphantly, "if not to heaven—then hand in hand to hell."

Young Ralegh would accept his religion from his parents much as he accepted his sword, resolved to keep both bright and becoming a gentleman. He was a man of the world; and the world then was boisterous and unruly. Men revelled in life like boys; their code of honour was as chivalrous and strange as that of boys. They lived, and they relished living.

Into this world young Ralegh went to make his way. He was poor, but had friends who had caused the spirit of life to thrive in him, who had nurtured his own belief in himself, and showed him what the world had in store for the courageous and skilful man. He was proud and ambitious, and few men have had better reason for pride, or have carried out their ambition with such success as he. He was always an aristocrat; so distinguished that ostentation became him, which, on a meaner man, would have passed into vulgarity. He was the most romantic figure of the most romantic age in the annals of English history.

His life was fuller of great accidents than life is wont to be, and all these accidents of good fortune and of bad he used to the full extent of a man's power, and by so doing he controlled them and became the master of his fate.

CHAPTER II

EARLY DAYS

His early going to Oxford—Old Ascham on quick wit and education—Life at a University—The Queen at Oxford—To the wars in France—Henry Champernoun—Stories of the wars.

OF Ralegh's early education little is known: it is uncertain whether he was taught at home, or went to one of the Grammar Schools which Stowe records with pride existed in nearly every country town. When he was sixteen he went to Oriel College, Oxford, of which his kinsman, C. Champernoun, was already a commoner, and sixteen was an early age, even for an Elizabethan to go to the University.

His kinsman's presence accounts in a measure for this early going (he started most of his life's enterprises under their shelter, though in the end he grew to overtop them), but his quick wit was another and the chief reason. Old Ascham begs the fond schoolmaster to modify his propensity for caning, and to discriminate between "the harde witte and the quicke witte. But this I will say, that even the wisest of your great beaters do as oft punishe nature as they do correcte faultes. Yea, many times the better nature is sorer punished; for if one by quicknes of witte take his lesson readelie, another by hardnes of witte taketh it not speedilie: the first is alwaies commended, the other is commonlie punished, when a wise schoolmaster should . . . not so

much wey what either of them is able to do now, as what either of them is likelie to do hereafter." He will have none of the quick wit. Slow and sure is his adage. To him quick wits are "even like over-sharpe tooles whose edges be verie soone turned." And Ascham was the Queen's tutor, and was striking out a new line in his theme, in his treatment of it and in his language. For a scholar of his calibre to write of the education of little boys, and to write of it in English (fine English it is, too, with its balanced cadences), demanded profuse apologies, which he is not slow to offer, and to offer at full length in his preface. No apology would be necessary now, when Education Bills have been known to overturn Governments, or even a very few years later than Ascham himself; but in Ascham's actual day, Latin was regarded as the language of the learned, and dignity, which Ascham never lost, an attribute of learning. His remarks are always judicious, and his summing up of the temperament, which he calls the quick wit, is brilliant if not final. It is in the nature of generalization to be limited. For there are many wits where quickness and hardness, which he distinguishes so sharply, are as memorably, as in the case of young Ralegh, combined—"sharpe tooles" whose edges be never turned. Such incontestably was Ralegh. His mind and his character (the motive force) were on the same level of strength; neither preyed on the other, and he lived in a time when the world offered scope, as never perhaps in quite the same way before or since, to the resistless energy of united strength.

But to return to Ascham, whose little treatise throws an invaluable quiet light of its own upon the methods of the time, when he was old and Ralegh was young, and upon the making of great men and the great need of

them—from its conception at the dinner party in the palace at Windsor, to its finish, years later, when the old man turned once more to the proper teaching of rudiments, doing his best for the younger generation whose best would outstrip all that he had ever dreamed of in his least scholastic moments. There is more than a touch of pathos in his warnings, for all their staid wisdom, and in his fears lest the young should be overcome by their "stout wilfulness"; blind as he could not but be to the goal to which stout wilfulness alone could lead them.

With a schoolmaster's conscious effort at broadmindedness he would not have the young one sit all day at his studies. "To joyne learnyng with cumlie exercises Conto Baldesoer Castiglione in his booke Cortegiane doth trimlie teache: which booke advisedlie read and diligentlie folowed, but one year at home in England would do a yong ientleman more good, I wisse, then three yearês travell abrode spent in Italie." And he passes by way of example "two noble Primeroses of nobilitie, the yong Duke of Suffolk and Lord H. Matrevers" (such a two as "our tyme may rather wishe than looke for agayne") on to his famous invective against the Italianating of Englishmen, with that constant note of sadness at the falling off of the present generation. His ears were deaf to such names as Sidney, Gilbert, Champernoun, Ralegh, names which time has set at their proper value, and against which Ascham's noble primroses sink into their proper insignificance.

Ralegh was at Oxford only one year, and Anthony Wood writes: "His natural parts being strangely advanced by academical learning, under the care of an excellent tutor, he became the ornament of the juniors, and was worthily esteemed a proficient in Oratory and

Philosophy." He seasoned his primer years at Oxford in knowledge and learning, a good ground, as Hooker says, and a sure foundation to build thereupon good actions.

Only one incident is recorded of that year of his life, and that is recorded by the illustrious Bacon in his apothegms. " . . . When Ralegh was a scholar at Oxford there was a cowardly fellow who happened to be a very good archer; but having been grossly abused by another, he bemoaned himself to Ralegh, and asked his advice what he should do to repair the wrong that had been offered him. Why, challenge him, answered Ralegh, to a match of shooting." It would be interesting to know how the repartee came to Lord Bacon's knowledge.

It is about in the proportion that Ralegh filled his life, compared with the ordinary way of living, that he took in one year out of Oxford what most men required seven years to take; for seven years was the usual time for a full course, and often, as in Germany to-day, men went from one University to another.

"Ein jeder lernt das was man lernen kann
Nur wer den Augenblick ergreifft das ist der rechte Mann."

Not that life at the University was restrained and dull. Far from it. Listen to Thomas Lever, who spoke of the work some twenty years before Ralegh's time. "From 5 to 6 a.m. there was common prayer with an exhortation of God's word in a common chapel, and from 6 to 10 either private study or common lectures. At 10 o'clock generally came dinner, most being content with a penny piece of beef amongst four. After this slender dinner the youths were either teaching or learning until 5 p.m., when they have a supper not much better than

S. F. BACON

their dinner. Immediately after they went either to reasoning in problems or unto some other study until 9 or 10 of the clock, and then being without fire were fain to walk or run up and down half an hour to get a heat on their feet before they went to bed." This sounds splendidly strenuous, and shows what was expected by the authorities, and the standard of the dons to which doubtless many conformed. From Nash's trenchant pamphlets we see the other side of the picture. Thomas Lever was a preacher: Thomas Nash was not. It is while he is engaged in "pouring hot boiling ink on this contemptible Heggledepeg's barrain scalp" (or as we should put it, proving in controversy the errors of Gabriel Harvey) that he gives his sudden glimpses of life and customs in town and university. "What will you give me when I bring him uppon the Stage in one of the principallest Colledges in Cambridge? Lay anie wager with me and I will: or if you laye no wager at all, Ile fetch him aloft in Pedantius, that exquisite Comedie in Trinitie Colledge: where under the cheife part from which it tooke his name, as namely the concise and firking finicaldo fine Schoolmaster, hee was full drawen and delineated from the soale of his foot to the crowne of his head. The just manner of his phrase in his Orations and Disputations they stufft his mouth with and no Buffianism throughout his whole bookes but they bolstered out his part with . . . whereupon Dick came and broke the Colledge glasse windowes and Doctor Perne (being then either for himself or Deputie Vice Chancellour) caused him to be fetcht in and set in the Stockes till the Shew was ended and a great part of the night after."

This tells a less sombre tale, and when Nash begins to be scurrilous about John Harvey, the third brother,

and records "the olde reakes hee kept with the wenches in Queenes Colledge Lane" (how strangely places retain their character!), the tale becomes less sombre still.

The Queen, too, would make journeys with royal visitors to the University, as in 1566, when Stowe tells with pride that she made "on the sodain an oration in Latin to the whole universitie of Oxford in the presence of the Spanish ambassadors;" so that neither university would be out of touch with the great world. Nor did the undergraduates keep at the same respectful distance from royalty that they are wont to now, as another delightful story of Nash about Harvey shows, who when the Court was at Audley End came "ruffling it out huffty-tuffty on his suite of velvet, to doo his countrey more worship and glory." He disputed with the courtiers and maids of honour, and at last was brought to kiss the Queen's hand, and the Queen was pleased to say that he looked like an Italian, a compliment from which he never quite recovered.

So there would be much to occupy the thoughts and attention of an ordinary boy of sixteen. But Ralegh in a year was ripe for other things, and left Oxford for the wars in France. The opportunity came through his kinsman, Henry Champernoun, son of John Champernoun of Modbury, his mother's eldest brother, raising a company of gentlemen to fight on the Huguenot side: and Ralegh took the opportunity of active service.

Very interesting are the steps in a great man's life. Chance seems to play so small a part. The instinct to get the most out of his personality becomes the conscious effort to which perhaps a great man chiefly owes his greatness.

Precisely in this way is the boy the father of the man, and Ralegh's life is a pregnant example of it. He

had, of course, no serious motive for leaving Oxford. He longed for fighting and adventures, and seized without a thought on the reckless impulse that led him to the wars, laughing probably at the sad head-shaking of his staid tutors. But he had learned how to learn: and his passion for life never damped his passion for knowledge, and impulse led him to the discipline which his nature demanded. The stern discipline and hardship of war were wanted to impress him, while still pliant, with the proper value of things by showing him with war's crude force the bare facts of life and death and human nature.

The strength and ability of the body told in those times, when man dealt directly with man, and encountered nature at closer quarters than he need now do, when her forces are fended off him and controlled for his use in ways then only dreamed of. Being weaker, men were rougher and more cruel.

That is manifest in the punishments of the Government. Executions were public. There was no other means for making the punishment known than by making the punishment visible. A man paid for trespass against the laws by disfigurement of his body—by branding on the forehead or palm, by loss of ear or hand: any one dangerous, or who threatened danger to the order with such difficulty established, was hung and quartered, or burned, or beheaded, and his execution was public and a sight not to be missed. The limbs of malefactors were exposed conspicuously at the Queen's pleasure.

Cruelty breeds fear, and fear breeds cunning. There was no longer the shelter of the monastery for the timid or the thoughtful. Accordingly, craftiness and conspiracy and secrecy prevailed in every corner of the country.

But there is the contrary side. The man who was able to be independent of these circumstances of cruelty,

rose above them to heights of bravery and self-reliance and strength, which are almost unknown in more peaceful times. There could be no monotony, or slackness of endeavour when a mistake or a careless word, or even a foolish gesture, might bring with it the consequence of death. A man was braced to continual effort and unconquerable control, when a moment's lack of either might mean life's actual ending, or a lifetime's long disgrace. There was no place for mediocrity. Those were the days of heroes and nonentities; soaring heroes, crawling nonentities.

Thus the chance which led Ralegh to the French wars, and Ralegh's readiness to seize that chance (chance by itself does little), were fortunate in the extreme for the best furtherance of his personality's development.

In France the religious wars between the Guisards and the Huguenots had broken out in the year 1562; and as Hayward, a contemporary chronicler, recounts, "In regarde to her owne person and state the Queen considered that if the Duke of Guise should prevail these fires of France both easilie might and readilie would cast dangerous sparkes over the ocean into England." She could not give aid openly to the Huguenots: but privately she sanctioned the enterprises of gentlemen who offered their services in aid of the Huguenots. For the real danger was that if the Huguenots were wiped out, a formidably close union between France and Spain might result. It was thus convenient that France should remain in a state of unrest until England should become properly strengthened and solidified in her isolated position. Elizabeth's actions were ruled in this case, as in all cases, not by religious faith or by sympathy with the people who were suffering death for their faith, but wholly by political expediency. Religion with her was

only a piece in the game, and she respected it as the most valuable piece. It is easy to cry "Shame!" and "Treachery!" when modern power over time and space has modified the rules of the diplomatic game; but game it remains, and truth in it still plays, and will always play, the subservient part of a nice convention or a fine pretext.

So those gallant gentlemen, who longed to fight and could find no more excellent reason than faith for fighting, went with their companies to France and fought their fill for the Huguenots. They realized the unfortunate necessity to which the Queen of England was put in ordaining that if they were taken prisoners a scroll should be pinned on their breasts as they dangled from the gallows, on which it was declared that they met their fate "for having come against the will of the Queen of England to the help of the Huguenots." That, probably, only lent zest to their endeavour. They would realize, too, that however the Queen of England might be forced to act, Elizabeth in her woman's heart sympathized deeply with the cause for which they fought; and Elizabeth, be sure, with her woman's wit, did her utmost to encourage them in this belief, and not without sincerity.

Henry Champernoun, of whose band of gentlemen volunteers, gathered mostly from Devonshire, Camden asserts that Ralegh was a member, was famous among these Huguenot supporters, though not so famous as his cousin, Gawen Champernoun, a son of Katherine, Ralegh's younger brother, Sir Arthur. Gawen progressed so far that he became son-in-law to the celebrated Count of Montgomery. No doubt Ralegh the nephew looked up to his uncles.

About his five or six years' absence in France (the date of his return is uncertain) Ralegh is reticent, partly, as Edwards suggests, in obedience to the maxim laid

down in his "History of the World" which runs, "Whosoever in writing a Modern Historie shall follow Truth too near the heels it may haply strike out his teeth;" and partly, too, for the reason that his experiences as a boy would be adventurous rather than suggestive. He would have been too young to be enough behind the scenes to know the motives of movements in which he took part, and the motives would alone lend a broad or historical value to the adventures. Among relations, youngness is commonly taken into full account. And Ralegh, for all his ability, had not probably the opportunity given him of seeing things other than as isolated incidents. As likely as not, he was asked to leave the tent or the room when matters of moment were about to be discussed.

But certain anecdotes he recalls in his "History of the World," one of which is well worth telling in his own good words, because it shows the manner of fighting that prevailed in these wars: "I saw in the third Civil War of France certain caves in Languedoc which had but one entrance, and that very narrow, cut out in the midway of high rocks, which we knew not how to enter by any ladder or engine; till at last by certain bundles of straw, let down by an iron chain, and a weighty stone in the midst, those that defended it were so smothered as they rendered themselves with their plate, money and other goods therein hidden."

He was not, however, always among the caves and hedgerows; almost certainly he was in Paris in 1572, sheltering with Philip Sidney in the house of the ambassador, Walsingham, when the terrible and famous massacre took place during the night of St. Bartholomew's Eve, in which the friends of the Duke of Guise boasted that more Protestants were slain than in the whole of the twelve years of the war.

CHAPTER III

TOWARDS MANHOOD

Friendship with George Gascoyne—Its importance—Ralegh in London—The arch-gossip Aubrey—Elizabethan London—Ralegh and Sir Humfrey Gilbert—The beginning of the great enterprise.

RALEGH returned from France in 1575 or 1576; and there are three years of his life—important years, from the age of twenty-three to twenty-six—which contain little or no record of his doings. Some authors, on the slenderest authority, maintain that he trailed a pike in the Lowlands, under Sir John Norris. But this is unlikely. The time of his possible presence there has been adroitly whittled down by William Oldys to the early part of the year 1578, and quite recently a document has been discovered bearing his signature, and the date of the deed is April 11th, 1578. If the signature is genuine, and expert evidence points to the fact that it is so, this is an additional, almost conclusive, proof that during these three years he remained in England.

There is another matter, intrinsically small, but exceedingly important because it throws a great light on his pursuits at this time. To George Gascoigne's satirical poem "The Steele Glas" is appended, among other commendatory verses, a poem by Walter Rawely, of the Middle Temple, which runs as follows—

"Swete were the sauce, would please ech kind of tast
The life likewise, were pure that never swerved
For spyteful tongs, in cankred stomaches plaste,
Deeme worst of things, which best (percase) deserved:
But what for that? this medcine may suffyse,
To scorne the rest, and seke to please the wise.

"Though sundry mindes in sundry sorte do deeme
Yet worthiest wights yelde praise for every payne,
But envious braynes, do nought (or light) esteeme
Such stately steppes as they cannot attaine.
For who so reapes, renowne above the rest,
With heapes of hate, shal surely be opprest.

"Wherefore to write, my censure of this booke
This Glasse of Steele impartially doth shewe,
Abuses all, to such as in it looke,
From prince to poore, from high estate to lowe
As for the verse, who lists like trade to trye,
I feare me much, shal hardly reache so high."

Edwards thinks, and rightly, that the verses show an intimate friendship with the poet in whose honour they were written; and "the poem itself to me discovers," writes Oldys, with his own quaint charm, "in the very first line of it a great air of that solid axiomatical vein which is observable in other productions of Ralegh's muse. And the whole middle hexastic is such an indication of his own fortune or fate, such a caution against that envy of superior merit which he himself ever struggled with, that it could proceed from no hand more properly than his own."

And these conjectures are strengthened into fact when it is remembered (and this point seems hitherto to have been passed over) that Gascoigne was a close friend of Sir Humfrey Gilbert, and a kinsman to Martin Frobisher. "Now it happened," writes Gascoigne ("in a letter from my lodging, where I march among the Muses for lacke of exercise in martial exployte"),

"now it happened that my selfe being one (amongst manie) beholding to the said S. Humfrey Gilbert for sundrie curtesies did come to visit him in Winter last past at his house in Limehouse, and beeing verie bolde to demande of him howe he spente his time in this loytering vacation from martial stratagems: he curteously tooke me up into his studie and there shewed me sundrie profitable and verie commendable exercises which he had perfected painefully with his own penne: And amongst the rest this present Discourse. The which as well because it was not long, as also because I understoode that M. Fourboiser (a kinsman of mine) did pretend to travaile in the same Discouverie, I craved at the said S. Humfreyes handes for two or three dayes to reade and peruse. And hee verie friendly granted my request, but still seming to doubt that thereby the same might, contrarie to his former determination be Imprinted."

Ralegh would meet Gascoigne often at Sir Humfrey's house, and to Gascoigne he probably owed his first impulse towards literature. For George Gascoigne was the most considerable man writing at that time; and though his work contained no actual greatness, it was very much on the right lines, that is to say, he was steeped in Chaucer and Gower, and acknowledged them his masters, rather than classical authors. Not that he was ignorant of either Latin or Greek; on the contrary, he was intimate with both, and his "Jocasta," which he adapted from an Italian translation by Dolce of the "Phœnissæ" of Euripides, was not only one of the first plays in blank verse, but also was the first known attempt to produce translated tragedy upon the English stage.

And therein lies Gascoigne's chief quality. He was

an innovator and original, and that bespeaks force of character, a trait which must have drawn young Ralegh to him. For like attracts like in a mysterious manner.

Gascoigne holds an interesting place in the literature of the time. Since the publication of "Tottel's Miscellany," in 1557, there had, for some thirty years, been a distinct lull in the output of poetry, and the work of Gascoigne was a prelude to the revival that came about the years 1579-1582, when Sidney, Spenser, Watson, and Lyly first made their appearance, the true harbingers of the mighty tempest of song that broke upon the world in 1590, and continued for some twenty amazing years.

He tried his hand, diffidently, as became a gentleman, at every form; realizing and pointing out, as it were, the capacity of the great instrument of the English language. "It is no mean feat," as an eminent scholar says, "to rank in history as George Gascoigne ranks with fair documentary evidence to prove his title as the actual first practitioner in English of comedy in prose, satire in regular verse, short prose tales, translated tragedy and literary animadversion" (in which word the eminent scholar refers to a short technical account of the making of English verse, prefixed to the "Steele Glas").

And apart from his writing, to which he devoted specially the last years of his life, there would be much that he would have in common with young Ralegh. Indeed, his life resembles in little the subsequent career of Ralegh himself, and the device, "Tam Marti quam Mercurio," suited him as nicely as it suited Ralegh who afterwards, by adopting the device, made it famous. He was the son of a gentleman of Bedfordshire, Sir John Gascoigne, and after going to Cambridge and being a member of Grays Inn, he served in Holland fighting

for the Dutch under William, Prince of Orange, and had many strange adventures. On his return to London he had some post at Court, the exact nature of which is not known, and he sat twice as Member of Parliament for Bedfordshire. What is of special interest is, that he was in close touch with the Earl of Leicester, and Lord Grey de Wilton; for in 1575, when the Queen made her famous visit to Kenilworth, it was Gascoigne who was commissioned to devise masks for her entertainment; and it is Lord Grey de Wilton to whom he dedicates the chief of his poems. Therefore it is extremely probable that young Ralegh owed to him, if not his actual introduction to Leicester, at any rate a great furtherance of Leicester's notice of Ralegh. It is surely more than coincidence that Gascoigne's chief patrons should have also been among Ralegh's principal helpers.

And Gascoigne's early death, at the age of forty, in 1577, would impress his influence upon his young friend, and that influence is discoverable in the directness and freedom from literary affectation of any kind, which is very noticeable in the work of both. And it is interesting to speculate whether, without Gascoigne, Ralegh would ever have possessed knowledge and insight enough to realize later Spenser's worth, which the scholar Harvey (no mean authority at that time) completely failed to see. Be that as it may, the friendship of Gascoigne and Ralegh anticipates pregnantly that friendship of his with Spenser which was of importance to the literature of the world.

But Ralegh was no paragon of a young man continually engaged in staid discourse with his elders. It is refreshing to have authority for a different and delightfully human glimpse of his life. The authority is Aubrey, and Aubrey loved gossip—and especially

scandalous gossip—so fervidly, that his stories bear the hall-mark of truth, apart from the fact that they are too ridiculous to be worth even Aubrey's while to fabricate. This is the tale, which Aubrey is careful to mention (his solemnity in telling his gossip comes little short of genius), was recounted to him by Dr. John Gell. "In his youthful time was one Charles Chester, that often kept company in his acquaintance: he was a bold, impertinent fellow, and they could never be at quiet for him; a perpetual talker and made a noise like a drumme in a roome. So one time at a taverne Sir W. R. beates him and seales up his mouthe (*i.e.* his upper and neather beard) with hard wax." Probably Charles Chester took this summary Elizabethan hint, but Aubrey throws no light on the hint's effect.

The little incident is typical, not so much of Ralegh, though it shows his swift vigour, as of the times. Such a thing happening now would be likely to cause a scandal which would be known to most of the civilized world. Then the continents were being discovered which would now join in the outcry of amazement or laughter.

London was small. St. Paul's was the centre of life: Chepeside was the main and fashionable street; the streets were narrow and the houses were chiefly built of wood. The Mermaid Tavern was in Friday Street. There were large residences with gardens in the city, public gardens on Tower Hill, and green graveyards round the churches. The river, crossed by one bridge—London Bridge—was in constant use; and a wall ran round the semicircle of the city. Temple Bar, Holborn Bar, Aldgate, Bishopsgate, Aldersgate, the bar at Smithfield, the bar on the Whitechapel highway—the gates and bars tell the city area, and outside the

LONDON

a. BISHOPS GATE STREETE. b. PAVL. c. ALHALLOWES IN THE WALL. d. S. TAWENS. e. HOLDEN STREETE. f. ALDERMANBVRYE. g. BARBICAN. h. ALDERSGATE STREETE. i. CHARTERHOVSE. k. HOLBORNE CONDVITE. l. CHANCERY LANE. m. TEMPLE BARE. n. HOLBORNE. o. GRAYES INN LANE. p. S. ANDREWES. q. NEWGATE. r. S. SONES. s. S. MC SHARRELS. t. CHEAP SYDE. u. BVCKLERS BVRYE. w. SNOWHILSTREET. x. THE STOCKS. y. THE EXCHAVGE. z. CORNEHILL.

NO 1 IN MAP. 2. COLMANSTREETE. 3. BASINGS HALL. 4. BROWNSHTONE. 5. LEADEN HALL. 6. GRATIOVS STREETE. 7. HENRACH HOVSE. 8. PANCHARCHE. 9. MARKE LANE. 10. BISCHOPS LANE. 11 FAVLES. 12. BASTCHEAPE. 13. FLEETSTREETE. 14. FETTER LANE. 15. S. DVNSTOCK. 16. THREMES STREETE. 17. LONDON STONE. 18. OLDE BAYLYE. 19. CLERKENWELL. 20. WINCHESTER HOVSE. 21. BATTELL BRIDGE. 22. BERMONDSEY STREETE

(IOANNES NORDEN ANGLUS DESCRIPSIT ANNO 1593)

walls clustered the Liberties, where vagrants had their quarters.

London was becoming crowded. In 1580 the Lord Burghley took measures to stop the expansion of the city, and from his table of births and deaths the population has been estimated at about ninety thousand. That figure is only approximate. There was no actual census until some eighty years later, when John Graunt, of Birchin Lane, at length succeeded in his scheme.

London was lively. Men lived much more in the streets. Merchants met customers there, and lawyers conversed with their clients. "Newgate Market, Cheapeside, Leaden Hall, and Gracechurch Street were unmeasurably pestered with the unimaginable increase and multiplicity of Market folkes, as well by carts as otherwise, to the great vexation of all the inhabitants, annoyance of the streete trouble, and danger to all passengers as well Coaches, Carts, etc. Horses as otherwise," writes Howes, giving the reason why magistrates of the City, in 1615, reduced the rude vast place of Smithfield into comely order for a market, and the citizens began their new pavement of broad freestone close to their shops, and took down all the high causes in the Strand and Holborn. West Smithfield was called Ruffian's Hall, because there the young men used to fight with sword and buckler. Duelling was prevalent—one of the sincerities of human life which bursts through the thickest quilted formulas, as Carlyle ejaculates. Fighting was as common an amusement and exercise as cricket and football are now. Every serving man, from the base to the best, carried a buckler at his back. Rapier and dagger, however, which began about this time, made fighting less common, for it was far more dangerous than the

manner of fighting with buckler and sword. "It was usuall to have Frays, Fightes and Quarrels upon the Sundayes and Holidayes, sometimes twenty, thirty and forty Swords and Bucklers, halfe against halfe, as well by quarrells of appointment as by chance: especially from the midst of Aprill untill the end of October by reason that Smithfield was then free from dirte and plashes. And in the winter season, all the high streetes were much annoyed and troubled with hourely frayes of sword and buckler men who took pleasure in that bragging fight. And although they made great shew of muche furie and fought often, yet seldom any man hurt, for thrusting was not then in use; neither would one in twentie strike beneath the waste by reason that they held it cowardly and beastly."

Pageants and processions enlivened the streets. The Queen and her courtiers could not hold aloof, and did not wish to. The Queen shared her father's liking for being on terms of cheerful repartee with the people. A courtier's arrival was a small event, for he travelled in state with a large retinue. Young gentlemen attached themselves to a great man, and wore his colours. And the great man needed a large number of followers, for his only means of keeping in touch with affairs and with friends was by messenger, and such messengers were necessarily brave and trustworthy men.

Up the Thames came ships loaded, perhaps, with treasure from foreign countries, and their men would land and spread news of battles in the Netherlands or Spain; or they would have strange tales to tell of new lands which they had found, of the manners of strange new peoples, of adventures with bears or morses or Spaniards, tales of marvellous wealth waiting for a

daring hand to take, of countries where the sun never set, of seas where meremaiden swam, and where the sound of the cracking ice was loud as the crash of artillery. Small wonder that the poets found inspiration in the London taverns, and that men lived almost in the streets, where at any moment they might meet some fellow with a new tale of the world's wonder that might very likely be true.

London was no place in which a man could easily remain inert. The unexpected constantly occurred on account of the dramatic way that news was inevitably brought. News came like vivid flashes of light on darkness, and these flashes were continual.

Ralegh's energy had always been conspicuous, even in those times. He was no slug, as Aubrey pithily puts it. And now it is that one of the great ideas of his life came to him, perhaps the greatest. We hear of him as connected with Sir Humfrey Gilbert's enterprise for discovering the north-west passage. Sir Humfrey was instigated by his navigator's desire to find a nearer passage to the East. But Ralegh widened in his mind the scope of the scheme, with him it expanded into something immeasurably greater. He saw the overcrowding of London beyond the limits of health and of comfort, and this overcrowding was troubling the level head of the great Burghley, who tried to cope with it by restricting the building of new houses. Ralegh was a man whose nature always was "to turn necessity to glorious gain." He saw the tremendous possibilities of this superabundance of men, how, if they could be placed in these new lands, they would prove of infinite value to the old country which, by their presence, they were annoying. He knew that Spaniards had settled in wild new lands, and lived there for a time like

marauders, and returned home with wealth which they had wrung from the natives. But his idea was larger; it was the first proper plan of colonization, for his imagination carried him far on into the future beyond the time of a generation or two, beyond the seizing of immediate wealth. The vastness of the scheme appealed to him; the difficulties he realized to be so great that they were worth a man's while to grapple with.

And the scheme held him by its enthralling interest, not only because he was ambitious (as all men worth anything are), and saw in it a means of furthering his ambitions; not only because he was patriotic, and saw in it a means of furthering his country's good, but primarily for the scheme's own sake. The idea obsessed him as an idea quite apart from its consequences, and whether the result would be good or bad; that would only be proved by the event, and that doubtless added enormously to the interest. But an inventor or a pioneer in any new field, who thinks chiefly of the consequences, does not get far on his journey. That part of any action is more profitably left to his friends and his advisers, and they are never far to seek.

Those were not the days of specialization. Affairs were not so intricate that an expert was needed to work out every branch of a subject. Less was known too; and a man of average intelligence could learn all there was to learn of most things without the standard of knowledge in each making him appear ignorant of all.

In June, 1578, Sir Humfrey Gilbert .who, as has been said, had been busily engaged for many years in the discovery of a north-west passage, obtained a royal charter for the greater purpose. "Elizabeth by the grace of God, Queen of England, etc. To all people to whom these presents shall come, greeting. Know

that of our especial grace certaine science and mere motion we have given and granted and by these presents for us our heires and successours doe give and grant to our trustie and well beloved servant Sir Humfrey Gilbert of Compton in our Countie of Devonshire knight, and to his heires and assignes for ever free libertie and license from time to time and at all times for ever hereafter to discover, finde, searche out and view such remote heathen and barbarous landes countries and territories, not actually possessed of any Christian prince or people, as to him his heires and assignes and to every or anie of them shall seem good: and the same to have hold, occupy and enjoy . . ." run the letters patent with their royal paraphernalia of phrase.

And in September, 1578, Gilbert had overcome the initial difficulty of collecting provisions sufficient to victual his eleven ships for a year, and of picking the right men for the enterprise, two matters of enormous importance. In the latter he was not successful. Sir Francis Knollys owned some of the ships, and his son went on the expedition. This son sowed dissension where unity was a vital necessity; he insulted Sir Humfrey Gilbert, and at length deserted. Contrary winds delayed the expedition, which became disorganized, and after a fight with the Spaniards was recalled. Ralegh was captain of a ship named the *Falcon*, and that was in all probability his first engagement at sea.

The expedition was on such a large scale that the Spanish authorities in England clamoured for its recall; and there is ample evidence, as Edwards remarks, to show that Ralegh was as much feared and hated in 1578 by the Spaniards, as ever he was at any later

period of his career. They tried always to thwart his great scheme of colonization, the greatness of which they realized, seeing the danger of it to their own possessions, and for a time they succeeded in their aims.

It is in connection with this expedition that Ralegh's name first appears in the Council Book.

CHAPTER IV

THE ARRIVAL

In Ireland—The state of the country—Cruelty of the wars—At Rakele—Illustrative anecdotes—Smerwick—Ralegh's initiative—Lord Grey de Wilton—Exploit at Bally—In touch with the home authorities.

THE scene changes to Ireland, where the continual fighting served as a training-ground—with France and the Netherlands—for the energies of the young gentleman of the period. Ireland seemed at this time to popish powers a suitable starting-place from which to overset the rule of the woman Elizabeth, who dared to establish again a Church independent of Rome, and to put her woman's self at the head of it. But the popish powers were mistaken in their choice. It is true that the Irish were devoutly Catholic; they were better pleased however to fight out their own feuds than to join together in any way for any cause. They were lawless and savage; and not even their hatred of the invading English could serve to concentrate them. They were far too impatient for serious warfare. They liked to come upon a foe—a Butler on a Geraldine—like a whirlwind, fight a terrific battle, and make off to their homes to listen to the songs by their bards, chanted in praise of their undying prowess, "as those Bardes and rythmers doe for a little reward or a share of a stolen cow," until the man of prowess praised "waxed most insolent and

halfe madde with the love of himself and his own lewd deeds. Of a most notorious thiefe . . . one of their Bardes will say, That he was none of the milke-sops that was brought up by the fireside, but that most of his dayes he spent in armes and valiant enterprises, that he did never eat his meat until it was won by the sword, that he lay not all night slugging under his mantle but used commonly to keep others waking to defend their lives, and did light his candle at the flames of their houses to bade him in the darknesse . . . and finally that he died not bewayled of many, but made many waile when he died, that dearly bought his death."

Such men were not ripe for the burden of a great cause. But one Sanders, an English Jesuit already past middle age, meeting with Fitzmaurice in Spain, formed a capital project of passing over to Ireland, subduing it, and passing from Ireland to England and driving out Elizabeth and her nation of Protestants.

In May, 1579, they landed at Dingle, after having on their voyage taken a small Bristol vessel, the sailors and captain of which they pitched into the sea. The landing at Dingle was impressive as the ceremony, which inaugurated the coming of the true religion, must needs be. "Two friars stepped first on shore; a bishop followed, mitre on head and crosier in hand, then Sanders, with the consecrated banner, and after him Fitzmaurice."

But the expedition did not rise to the level of its inauguration. It served only to stir up a savage rebellion in Munster, and to bring devastation upon the country.

It was to help quell the insurrection that Ralegh came to Ireland as captain of a company of one hundred foot-soldiers at the end of 1579, or the beginning of 1580.

The war—if war it can be called—was carried on with savage cruelty on both sides. Less could not be

expected. The times were not gentle, when little girls in London might see men hung and quartered, and limbs stared down from the chief gates of most cities. Nor would mercy be expected from generals who came to Ireland as Pelham came, and as Lord Grey de Wilton came, regarding Ireland as the grave of reputation. To Ralegh, too, the service was itself distasteful. He writes with characteristic vigour of phrase to the Earl of Leicester, "I would disdayn it as mich to keap sheepe. I will not trouble your honor with the busyness of this loste land; for that Sir Warram Sentleger can best of any man deliver unto your lordshipe the good, the bad, the mischief, the means to amende, and all in all of this common welthe or rather common woe."

The English soldiery regarded the Irish as savages who would not live at peace, and must be exterminated, with the exception of the actual tillers of the ground or churls as they were called. And this point of view was encouraged by those in authority, who had neither men nor money to spare for guarding and feeding prisoners. "Death," as Froude says, "was the only gaoler their finances could support." Nothing can extenuate cruelty; but it is well to face the fact that cruelty, and cruelty not greatly less atrocious than this, was an absolute attribute of the Elizabethan age. The one quality, which runs through all the pages of every history of every man and every movement, is vitality—intense, burning vitality; and this vitality illumined the literature, chaotic as much of it is, and beat pulsing through the veins of the nation, explaining its magnificent advance, and enthusiasm and greatness, even as it explains its brutality. England was like a boy who is suddenly conscious of being strong and of being free, with all the capacity of some young Hercules and all his reckless faults.

When Ralegh joined the Irish service, Lord Justice Pelham was in the position of Lord Deputy. Soon after his arrival, however, Pelham was recalled, greatly to his pleasure, and Lord Grey de Wilton, Gascoigne's patron and general in the Netherlands, undertook the command of the forces, and the Earl of Ormond, an Irishman, was made Lieutenant of Munster. These were Ralegh's chiefs; and his criticism of their methods of management first brought him, as will be seen later, under the direct notice of the great Burghley.

As an active soldier, however, his exploits are exciting and adventurous, and they are not hidden in the obscurity which hid his exploits in France. The same Hooker who has been already quoted, records them with pride in his continuation of Holinshed's Chronicles.

Ralegh was once stationed with a troop of cavalry at Rakele under Lord Grey. He was always a well-eyed man and observed that the Irish were in the habit of hurrying down upon an encampment immediately it had been abandoned. Accordingly, he made a plan to surprise them, and the plan was successful. He captured a considerable number of prisoners. One of the Irish carried a bundle of withies, and Ralegh went up to him and asked him why he carried the withies. "To hang English churls with," was the blunt answer. "Is that so?" said Ralegh. "They shall now serve for an Irish kerne." And without more ado he bade his men hang him to the nearest tree. The repartee was prompt and savage. It is typical of the time that it should have happened; and intensely typical that a careful record should have been made in contemporary history.

Another time we read that Ralegh, on a small expedition to a certain Lord Barry, of Barry Court, in a fight against great odds, twice at his own personal peril

rescued one Henry Moyle, who twice was caught in the soft bog. "He was unhorsed, and stood with his pistol and quarter-staff, one man against twenty." History does not relate what he said to Henry Moyle on his return to camp. The two stories stand well side by side. At the tragic sacking of Smerwick Ralegh was one of the captains ordered to carry out the last desperate instructions: the siege is illustrative not only of that bad Irish campaign, but also shows what a personal part high officers used to take in battles.

A second band of Papal soldiers, comprised of Italians, Spaniards and Frenchmen, came to Ireland in 1580, and made Smerwick their headquarters, a fort on the shore fully exposed to the Atlantic winds. Here Lord Grey came upon them, but was obliged to wait eight days with his men until Sir William Winter arrived in Ventry harbour with cannon and ammunition, and at length joined Admiral Bingham in Smerwick Bay. Lord Grey galloped down over the sands to welcome Winter. Speedily the cannon were landed and placed in position before the fort, and the bombardment began. The English crept nearer after the first day, until the cannon were within a cable's length of the wall, and Sir William Winter himself taking careful aim, brought down the enemy's chief piece, and a man appeared on the ramparts waving a white handkerchief. The firing ceased. Then Signor Jeffrey, an Italian, came to entreat grace from the Lord Deputy, but grace was refused him. "Afterward their Coronnel Don Sebastian came forth to intreate that they might part with their armes like souldiers, at the least with their lives according to the custome of war . . . it was strongly denied him and told him by the Lord Deputie himselfe that they could not justly pleade either custome of warre or lawe of nations

—for that they were not any lawfull enemies. : . ." The Pope sent them? asked Lord Grey de Wilton, and declared himself surprised, the bitter old enthusiast, that gentlemen should undertake a commission from "a detestable shaveling the right antichrist and patron of the doctrine of devils." He would only agree to wait till morning. So on the morning of the next November day, the garrison, seven hundred men, piled their arms, and with a few women and children stood waiting, while the great Atlantic waves beat coldly, sullenly on the shore. "Then put I in certain bands who fell straight to execution," writes Grey, with grim brevity. Six hundred men in all were slain that November morning, and Grey had the bodies stripped and laid in neat lines upon the shore, and Grey looked at them without emotion, and thought them "as gallant and goodly personages as ever I saw." So he wrote to the Queen, informing her of the victory, and the Queen wrote back thanking him, adding a postscript in her own hand (a special mark of honour) warmly approving of his action: and Camden courteously lies when he says that Grey shed tears and Elizabeth wished the cruelty had been unnecessary. Captain of one of these "certain bands" was Walter Ralegh. Edmund Spenser was at this time secretary to Lord Grey de Wilton, and he writes in that scholarly graphic treatise in dialogue form, which has been already quoted, namely the "View of the State of Ireland"—"Whereupon the said Coronell did absolutely yeeld himselfe and the fort, with all therein, and craved only mercy, which it being not thought good to shew them, for danger of them, if, being saved they should afterwards join with the Irish; and also for terrour to the Irish who are much imboldened by those forraigne succours, and also put in hope of more ere long:

there was no other way, but to make that short end of them as was made." Thus writes Edmund Spenser, the author of the "Faerie Queen," a man not famous for his ferity.

Praise and blame are easy to dispense: but they are dangerous commodities. They raise too freely the thick white dust of prejudice which even dims eyes which are anxious to observe a neighbour, and effectually blinds eyes that wish to peer into the recesses of a bygone age. Let us be glad if we are more human and more humane, and avoid hugging ourselves too closely on imagined superiority. Violent death stalked down every alley of life; and violent death is not more dreadful than the haggard existence in which millions are nursed to-day. Our cruelty is a little less apparent, and more respectable. That is at any rate something. Let us be thankful for that, and let us by all means subscribe to the Home for Lost Cats.

But Ralegh was not content with the perils and excitement of active service. He possessed initiative. He saw the masses of money that were being spent, and saw that full value was not being obtained. The war in his opinion was being mismanaged. He did not hesitate to write to the authorities at home, stating in round terms what his opinion was. It is not surprising that Lord Grey de Wilton was annoyed by the young man's audacity. "I neither like his carriage," he writes to Walsingham, "nor his company: and therefore other than by direction and commandment, and what his right can require he is not to expect at my hands." Apart from the administration of the war there was little in common between the two men. Lord Grey was a staunch Protestant, unwavering in his religious zeal, and blind in his hatred of Popery. He would have passed

through Ireland, had he had his will, with the sword gripped in one hand and the Bible and the English Prayer-book clasped tightly in the other.

Ralegh was not that order of man. There was nothing grim and nothing austere about him. He was a man of address. Lord Grey was stiff and blunt, a Puritan a little before his proper time. Very characteristic is the sentence in his letter to the Queen, telling of the death of young Cheke. "So wrought in him God's spirit, plainly declaring him a child of his; elected to be no less comfort of his good and godly friends than great instruction and manifest motion of every other hearer that stood by, of whom there was a good troop." He was inclined to regard most things from the standpoint of religious experience. He was not addicted to humanity.

The Irish were not only rebels against his country; they were what was far worse—rebels against his own faith, and he sullenly objected to any measures which might serve to bring them into line with English interests. He wished to force his own salvation upon them rather than to make them useful subjects of the Queen.

That must have been where Ralegh chiefly differed from him. And there is an interesting example of this difference and of one of Ralegh's chief powers, to wit his influence over men. For Ralegh was wise and politic. He saw the state of affairs in Ireland and formed in his mind a definite plan of action—to use Irish factions to English purpose, and not to allow them to try and join under the cause of another religion. The most dangerous enemies were the crafty instigators in the background; and one of the most influential of these was an Anglo-Irish chieftain, named Lord Roche, who lived at Bally, some twenty miles from Cork where Ralegh was stationed.

Ralegh convinced Lord Grey of the importance of bringing this feeder of revolt as prisoner to Cork, and undertook to do so himself with his small band of followers. And this he did by sheer dexterity and daring in the teeth of overwhelming difficulty. For the Seneschal of Imokelly, one Fitz-Edmonds, had wind of Ralegh's intention, and lay in ambush for him with eight hundred men. But Ralegh outwitted him by his speed and dashed with his small party through the ambuscade. That was not all. Arrived at Bally, he was met by five hundred townsmen and tenantry of Lord Roche. These men he held at bay with the larger part of his band, and himself, with six chosen men, rode on to Lord Roche's castle. At the gate he called out that he desired to speak with Lord Roche, and was answered that he would not be permitted to enter with more than two followers. But while he and the seneschal were parleying, the six of them slipped into the gate, and gained admission for another party which Ralegh had bidden follow him at a short interval, the attention of the warders being engaged by Ralegh, so that before the Irish knew what had happened, they found the castle courtyard full of musketeers, armed and standing to attention. Ralegh meanwhile was in the presence of Lord Roche, who was forced to treat the intruder as a guest, and sturdily maintaining his loyalty to the Queen, ordered his servants to bring in a banquet. Ralegh listened with all courtesy; and said that it was the will of the Lord Deputy of Ireland to hear with his own ears this noble confession of loyalty, and that he must beg leave to escort Lord Roche and his family to Cork. Lord Roche demurred. Ralegh insisted. It is difficult to decide whether the situation appealed more strongly to his sense of humour or to his sense of power. The Irish chieftain at his own table in

the banqueting-hall of his own castle, surrounded by his men and the young captain with his two soldiers inside, some dozen in the courtyard and a few more dozen in the town, twenty miles from any assistance! "Desperation begetteth courage but not greater nor so lively as doth assured confidence," he wrote some thirty years later. Now his courage was certainly backed by both.

Gradually Lord Roche came to realize the inflexible determination of the young man; and agreed to what by Ralegh's inevitable personal strength of will became his only possible course. He consented to go to Cork, and went. The story does not end here. Not only did he go to Cork, but from being the Queen's dangerous foe, he became, through Ralegh's influence, the Queen's loyal supporter and staunch friend, and three of his sons actually were slain fighting for the Queen's cause in Ireland. That was one of Ralegh's triumphs. It shows the mettle of the man and his power over others, and more than that it bears out strikingly a distinct line of policy, which he formed then and expressed later, in dealing with the disaffected. Minding these Irish experiences, it is interesting to read what he says of Amilcar's treatment of the mercenaries in revolt. "Against these inconveniences, Mercy and Severity, used with due respect, are the best remedies. In neither of which Amilcar failed. For as long as these his own soldiours were in any way likely to be reclaimed by gentle courses, his humanitie was ready to invite them. But when they were transported with beastly outrage beyond all regard of honesty and shame, he rewarded their villainie with answerable vengeance, casting them unto wilde beasts to be devoured."

Moreover, it is certain that Lord Burghley respected Ralegh's judgment, for there is a remarkable paper

extant written in the handwriting of both, which shows that Burghley conferred privately with Ralegh about the Irish rebellion. The document is dated October 25, 1582, and is inscribed with the words, "The opinion of Mr. Rawley upon motions made to hym for the meanes of subduyng the Rebellion in Monster." And in it the point upon which Ralegh chiefly insists is the pressing need to win over the Irish chieftains to the Queen's cause; as he had himself already done conspicuously in the case of Lord Roche.

There is a story that Ralegh owed his first introduction to the Queen's favour by his address in a conference before her, in which he proved his opinion, man to man, against Lord Grey de Wilton, his superior; but whether this story with all its dramatic possibilities is valid or not, it is certain that his conduct in Ireland brought him into great notice: and he was not the man easily to slip from any advantage he had gained. We hear of him joining the Earl of Leicester in a state mission to the Netherlands, and then he bursts into final brilliant prominence as courtier and his Queen's favourite.

CHAPTER V

QUEEN'S FAVOURITE

Court life—The Queen's position—Her character—She takes notice of Ralegh—Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester—Sir Philip Sidney—Burghley, the Lord High Treasurer, and Walsingham—Robert Cecil—The dress of the courtier—The language of the courtier—The other side, and the other Queen—Mary, Queen of Scots—The great intrigue—Its discovery—Death of Queen Mary.

THE Court was the brilliant feature of the time. The Court was not confined to ceremonial functions and presentations—it was not a bath in which a man or a woman must be dipped before he or she could lay any real claim to distinguished respectability. The Court had a vivid existence of its own. "It was the centre, not of government alone, but of the fine arts: the exemplar of culture and civilization." The Court held a lien on the gaiety and life of the time. Courtiers and merchants (the two chief classes) were as distinct as a little later were town and gown at the Universities. To be a proper courtier became a cult.

Three great books, extraordinarily typical of the Renaissance, were written in almost identical years, books which pointed to new scope for the State, for the Prince, and for the private man. In 1513 Machiavel completed *The Prince*, in 1516 Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* was published, and in the same year Count Baldassare Castiglione finished his *Book of the Courtier*.

The dream of the Utopia may never be realized;

but in some seventy-five years a close example of the Prince and of the Courtier were found in Queen Elizabeth, and in many of the men who surrounded her. The *Book of the Courtier* was translated into all the languages of Europe, and became the text-book of the cult. Its English translator was Thomas Hoby, and his work, as has been seen, was commended by the judicious Ascham. Castiglione was chaffed for moulding his own conduct precisely on the model of the perfect courtier he portrays in his book; and he could not but confess that the man of his imagination was the man he would choose to be. And, indeed, it would be what every courtier would aspire to be, as Wordsworth's Happy Warrior,

> "This is the happy Warrior, this is he
> That every man in arms should wish to be."

The Courtier must be gallant in the use of arms, proficient in all exercises of the body, skilled in all exercises of the mind; he must be ready and witty of tongue; he must be well-born and distinguished. But his realm is beyond the mere enterprise of accomplishments and birth. For the book ends with Bembo's great praise of Beauty—that Beauty "which is the origin of all other beawtye, whiche never encreaseth nor diminisheth always bewtifull and of itself . . . most simple. This is the beawtye unseperable from the high bountye, whiche with her voyce calleth and draweth to her all thynges . . . ," and an understanding of this Heavenly Beauty must be the final trait of the Perfect Courtier.

And it is well to bear this in mind. For this feeling for beauty existed in the Elizabethan courtier, just as it gave the finishing touch to Castiglione's hero; and existed as really as the more conspicuous qualities of gallantry and strength and intellect. Vitality, as has

been said again and again, was the keynote of the age; and it is apparent in this aspiration towards beauty, just as it is apparent in reckless cruelty. The compass of the age was immense. And every instinct, every tendency of brute or god, raged with intense life, and was expressed. Nothing lay dormant. The centre of all this life, of all this genius for living was the Court; and the illustrious head of the Court was Queen Elizabeth.

Guy de Maupassant has written a story of a small band of French soldiers who are at the last gasp with hunger and weariness and cold. They cannot march any further. They are content to lie down in the snow and die. But two fugitives come running to them, an old man and his grand-daughter, a young girl. "Allons les camarades," cries the Sergeant Pratique, "faut porter cette demoiselle-là ou bien nous n' sommes pu Français, nom d'un chien." So the worn-out men forget their weariness and carry her; they dare the cold and strip off their overcoats to keep her warm; they find new courage and drive back a party of the enemy, and they reach the French lines in safety. "What's that you're carrying?" asks a soldier. "Aussitôt une petite figure blonde apparut, depeignée et souriante qui répondit, 'C'est moi, monsieur.' Un rire s'éleva parmi les hommes et une joie courut dans leurs cœurs. Alors Pratique agita son képi en vociferant, 'Vive la France.'"

There in little is the exact nature of Elizabeth's influence, and her influence was conscious and acted, not upon the immediate Court alone, but upon England. De Maupassant does not give any details of the girl, nothing of her character, not even her name. They are not relevant to his purpose. She may have as many faults in her small way as Elizabeth had in her great way. He does not mention them.

Elisabeth by der gratien Gods Coninginne van Engelant Vrancrijck ende Irlant, Beschermaesse des Geloofs.

Such a mass of detail, however, is known about Elizabeth, and her faults have been so relentlessly exposed in the interest of Truth—her meanness, her avarice, her treachery, her wantonness, and what not—that the whole picture of the woman who was learned enough to speak in public impromptu in Latin and could converse in many languages, of the woman who was great enough to cause her own worship to be the fashion, and the sincere fashion, of the woman who was sufficiently beautiful and sufficiently distinguished to shine like a diamond on the forehead of that resplendent age,—is almost lost to view, so clouded with the dust of detraction has that picture become.

She was the very epitome of the time. All the brutality and energy and brilliance of that brutal, vital age found their counterpart in her. And she was a woman, a fitting contemporary of Catherine de Medicis. But she was too much a politician to be a good woman; and too much a woman to be a good politician.

To all the power which a beautiful woman, and a woman strong in body and intellect and passion, always has possessed and always will possess, she added the prestige of being Queen of England. Whereas the passions of her father threw Europe into confusion, the love affairs of Elizabeth, less impetuously managed, often held the balance between nations and brought every royal prince to England as suitor for her hand, and the great English courtiers scowled or laughed at them, but were kept in allegiance by their sovereign.

Wit, birth, and bearing found favour in her sight. There was no room at her Court for a fool. She loved wit as she loved splendour.

The Queen had heard of Humfrey Gilbert's nephew from Humfrey Gilbert's aunt, one of her intimate attendant women; and when Ralegh first came into notice by his exploits in Ireland, she was inclined to favour him. She was interested in his career, as a letter bears witness in which she writes, ". . . for that our pleasure is to have our Servaunt Walter Rawley treyned some longer tyme in that our realme for his better experience in Martiall affaires, and for the special care we have to doe him good in respect of his kyndred that have served us some of them (as you knowe) neer aboute our Parson: theise are to require youe that the leading of the said bande may be committed to the said Rawley."

Many stories are extant about his first meeting with Elizabeth. Truth hides in all of them. Some say that the Queen was present when Lord Grey de Wilton and young Ralegh were put face to face in a council chamber before Lord Burghley, and that she was struck by the power and skill with which he made good his case, proving the lack of judgment Lord Grey had shown in conducting the affairs of the war. Old Thomas Fuller, that worthiest of his own worthies (he had an eye for romantic effect, steadfast as he was for truth in matters of importance), relates that "Her Majesty, meeting with a plashy place, made some scruple to go on; when Ralegh (dressed in the gay and genteel habit of those times) presently cast off and spread his new plush cloak on the ground, whereon the Queen trod gently over, rewarding him afterwards with many suits for his so free and seasonable tender of so fair a footcloth. Thus an advantageous admission into the notice of a prince is more than half a degree to preferment." Industrious Fuller does not leave it at that; he proceeds to tell

how Ralegh wrote on a window in the Queen's presence,

"Fain would I climb, but that I fear to fall,"

and how the Queen added with more grace than rhythm,

"If thy heart fail thee, climb not at all."

Ralegh's heart did not fail him. He became the Queen's lover; and his influence over the Queen was so recognized that Tarleton, the famous comedian, dared, during a performance, to add point to the words, "See, the knave commands the queen," by stretching out his hand towards Ralegh, who stood by the Queen. And Elizabeth, it is recorded, frowned. Swift was his ascent to fortune, came the first step how it may.

Elizabeth was too clever to try to lay aside her sex, though she was a skilful markswoman, an able horsewoman. Even her staid Archbishop Whitgift she used to tease, saying (as Isaac Walton gravely records as a fair testimony of her piety) that "she would never eat flesh in Lent without obtaining a License from her little black husband: and that she pitied him because she trusted him."

She was so born a Queen that she was able to do and say the most dangerous things without losing her distinction, or lessening her dignity.

And it is small wonder in those days when in England the whole force of the Renaissance turned as it were to a rapture of patriotism that such a Queen should be the visible emblem of the country, and be herself worshipped. Men might rave at her whims, they were driven frantic by them, but in their hearts they cherished her as Queen of themselves and Queen of their country. Fortunately for herself, and fortunately for England, her intellect mastered her passions, though that does not

prove that she was passionless: far from it. There is nothing to justify that last scandal of a moral age which would damn her as a feelingless flirt. Lord Bacon, the wise Baron of Verulam, summed the matter up pithily, attaching its right value to the question, which, after all, is a paltry one, when, in writing on the Fortunate Memory, he says: "She suffered herself to be honoured and carressed and celebrated and extolled with the name of Love; and wished it, and continued it beyond the suitability of her age. If you take these things more softly, they may not even be without some admiration, because such things are commonly found in our fabulous narratives of a Queen in the Islands of Bliss, with her hall and her institutes, who receives the administrations of Love, but prohibits its licentiousness. If you judge them more severely, still they have this admirable circumstance, that gratifications of this sort did not much hurt her reputation, and not at all her majesty; nor ever relaxed her government, nor were any notable impediment to her State affairs." And it must be remembered that the times were neither fastidious nor gentle, and that when Bacon says licentiousness (*lasciviam* is the Latin word he uses) he meant licentiousness. Elizabeth was too sane, and too clever, and too busy to have time to be licentious: just as she could not have retained her control over men and control over herself, seen in the adroit way in which she managed the foreign princes, if she had remained what is called pure.

Masterly was her knowledge and treatment of men. Roughly speaking, they were divided into two classes; those whom she liked, and those whom she valued: but she kept them all imperiously to her will. The great Burghley was her man of business; he and his son Robert Cecil were her chief statesmen, and well she knew

their value: capricious and exacting as she might be, she respected their advice and gave way to it. "Burghley," wrote Leicester, at the height of his arrogant power, "could do more with her in an hour than others in seven years." And he wrote concerning some political business. Never, when Leicester had most influence with the Queen, did she ever allow him to control her political actions, or in any way to supplant Cecil.

Robert Dudley, born about the year 1532, made Earl of Leicester in 1564, enjoyed the Queen's good-will more continuously and more to his advantage than any other of her lovers. He was regarded as the chief man in England by the ambassadors of foreign princes: he was for a long time the most magnificent. But Elizabeth kept always to her maxim, that England should be a country with one mistress and no master; much to Leicester's displeasure. His desire was to be master. He suggests a comparison with Milton's Satan, "better to reign in Hell than to serve in Heav'n," when he tried, and tried with conspicuous ill-success, to become King of the Netherlands. By the old nobility, staunch Sussex and proud Norfolk, he was hated. With the Duke of Norfolk, he on one occasion came to blows, when, during a game of tennis, of which the Queen was a spectator, he snatched her pocket-handkerchief to wipe the sweat from his forehead. They thought him saucy and overweening. To the Queen his insolence was not unpleasant. Cecil disliked him (he does not appear a man to hate any one) and judiciously draws up papers contrasting Leicester and other suitors, especially the Archduke Charles, much to Leicester's disadvantage. But for all his glitter and influence, he was hated by the English people. His name had an ill sound ever since the untoward death of his wife, Amy Robsart. Though

the pamphlet *Leicester's Commonwealth* is wholly unreliable, which among other slanders, states that the Lady Amy was actually murdered at his command, it is most probable that she committed suicide through misery at her neglect. Well enough men knew what was meant when the husband in the *Yorkshire Tragedy* says, after he has thrown his wife down and slain her:

> "The surest way to charm a woman's tongue
> Is—break her neck: a politician did it."

They thought of the stone staircase at Cumnor and shuddered. The people did not like his way of cheapening their Queen's good name: they did not like the man who caused scandals to arise round her. In 1560 Anne Dowe of Brentford was imprisoned for asserting that Elizabeth was with child by Robert Dudley; and she was the first of a long line of offenders who were punished for the same assertion.

And just as men hated Dudley for his arrogance, and for his daring to think even of setting himself beside their Queen, so they loved his nephew, Sir Philip Sidney, for the grace which his hand brought to everything which he touched. He fulfilled the ideal of Castiglione's Courtier. He was the antithesis of the rough, unmannered Dudley. In Dudley all the cruelty and ostentation and savage power of the time seem to find expression; whereas in Philip Sidney, all its grace and skill and poetry were manifest. Men vied with one another in his praises, men fought for the right to call him friend, and a woman became immortal by being "Sidney's sister." "Sidney, the Siren of this latter age," writes Barnefield; "divine Sir Philip," Michael Drayton calls him; and Ben Jonson, as though in defiance of the charge of exaggeration utters (you can hear him say it),

"the godlike Sidney." Even the ribald Nash lowers his mad voice to the note of reverence, "Apollo hath resigned his Ivory Harpe unto Astrophel and he, like Mercury, must lull you a sleep with his musicke. Sleepe Argus, sleep Ignorance, sleep Impudence, for Mercury hath Io and onely Io Paean belongeth to Astrophel. Deare Astrophel, that in the ashes of thy Love livest againe like the Phoenix; o might thy bodie (as thy name) live againe likewise here amongst us; but the earthe, the mother of mortality hath snacht thee too soone into her chilled cold armes, and will not let thee by any meanes be drawne from her deadly imbrace; and thy divine Soule, carried on an Angels wings to heaven, is installed in Hermes place sole prolocutor to the Gods." His life was a poem, which all the men who lived with him, and all the men who knew his name, were great enough to read and to appreciate; his death is an example for all time. Fame with its common story cannot sully the brightness of the superb sacrifice of that superb self.

Dudley expressed the presumptuous vitality of the Court, and Sidney its vital poetry. A little aloof from the Court, which he was apt to regard with kindly disdain at its frivolity, moved the staid figure of Burghley, the Lord High Treasurer of England, Elizabeth's great man of business, perhaps the finest political intelligence that has ever thought out a way for a country through the most complicated difficulties, at a time when disaster crouched ever ready to spring and involve that country in ruin.

William Cecil had an absolute mastery over every detail; he possessed a genius for arrangement. Nothing escaped his notice. He was a kind of machine which attracted all the wild impulses of the time; they passed

into the machine's mouth disordered, unarranged; and they passed out shaped, controlled by his slow inevitable will. As a statesman he appears hardly human in his freedom from all personality; he seems a mask hiding the brain of England, and regulating it to the only end where success could be. Men rose to fame fiercely struggling, and did brilliant acts or mad acts, and sank again or settled as the case might be; but always at the supreme head, always alert, always careful, impassive as some Eastern Buddha, sat the Lord Burghley, managing the affairs of the state, managing even the state's impulsive, whimsical mistress. His impassivity afflicted her at times, so that she played pranks on him, vainly endeavouring to upset his restraint and his dignity; but her pranks were hardly heeded. He was English to the solid backbone, and resisted unequivocally the rage of fashion that went out towards all that was foreign; and yet his foreign policy was unswerving and level-headed; he looked upon war as the last terrible resource of statecraft, in an age in which fighting was regarded as the highroad to glory, and was loved for its own wild sake. Elizabeth showed her knowledge of the right word when she called him her "spirit" and her "oracle"; and the courtiers their discernment of the obvious, when they called him "old fox." Together the two names describe him with some accuracy.

At his right hand worked Sir Francis Walsingham, who was more astute, but lacked Burghley's greatness of mind. Walsingham was an admirable servant: he would never have been successful under the full weight of responsibility. It was he who developed the system of espionage through every country in Europe, and brought it to an uncanny perfection. That system of secret messages was typical of the day; it was so easy to keep

WILLIAM CECIL, LORD BURGHLEY

facts hidden, and to pervert them advantageously when news travelled so slowly, that it was a necessity to have reliable men on every spot to check statements and to watch events and tendencies. When Walsingham died in 1590, Burghley showed his indomitable energy by mastering the intricate cyphers and details connected with the business; he was then at the good age of seventy.

As his health failed, his son, Robert Cecil, took more and more of his great father's responsibilities upon himself; and "The Little Secretary," as the queen called him, became gradually the most important man in the realm. He was craftier than his father, and more adaptable, but he never rose to the greatness of Lord Burghley. His figure is not so imposing; there was something underhand about his conduct, which does not appear in the slow, diplomatic wisdom of the older man.

There comes a strange interest in knowing that this great intelligence of Burghley arranged not only the affairs of the State, but the details of his household with the same impassive power. His steward writes to him about a new gown which is wanted for his mother: "The gown that you would make it must be for every day and yet because it comes from you (except you write to her to the contrary) she will make it her holiday gown, whereof she hath great store already, both of silk and cloth. But I think, sir, if you make her one of cloth with some velvet on it, with your letter to desire her for your sake to wear it daily, she would accustom herself to it: so as she would forget to go any longer in such base apparel as she hath used to have a delight in which is too mean for one of a lower estate than she is."

And of Burghley's earlier days, Roger Ascham gives an attractive glimpse in his introduction to *The*

Schoolmaster, where he shows the man's methodical life and wide interests; for the renewal of learning did not at all pass Burghley by; he was an enthusiast about the proper pronunciation of the Greek tongue, and in 1541 was hotly engaged in the disputes. But to old Ascham: he writes about the important dinner, in 1563, at which the subject of his book was suggested to him: "M. Secretary hath this accustomed manner though his head be never so full of most weightie matters of the Realme, yet, at diner time he doth seeme to lay them alwaies aside; and findeth ever fit occasion to taulke pleasantly of other matters, but most gladly of some matter of learning: wherein he will curteslie heare the minde of the meanest at his table."

It is refreshing to see how in his private life he was a simple-minded man, who suffered from the gout and was plagued with quack remedies, all of which he carefully docketed, having no doubt tried their efficacy before he set them on one side.

Such were the chief figures when Ralegh came to the Court.

Nothing illustrates his rapid rise in favour so well as a letter which Ralegh writes to Lord Burghley from the Court at Greenwich. The letter shows that Burghley had asked for his help on behalf of his son-in-law, the Earl of Oxford, who was bitterly hostile to Ralegh and had, as may be gathered from the letter, gone out of his way to do him an injury. "I delivered Her Your Lordship's letter. What I said further, how honorable and profittabell it weare for Her Majestie to have regard to Your Lordship's healthe and quiett, I leve to the witnesse of God and good reporte of Her Highnesse. And the more to witnesse how desirous I am of Your Lordship's favor and good opinion, I am contente, for your sake, to laye

the sarpente before the fire, as miche as in me lieth, that, having recovered strengthe, myself may be moste in danger of his poyson and stinge. For answere, Her Majestie would give me none other, but that she wolde satisfye Your Lordship, of whom she ever had, and would ever have, special regard . . . I humblie take my lave. From Grenewiche this present Friday, May 12, 1583."

Here is Lord Burghley using the help of the young man whose valour and address in Ireland he had observed and whom he had helped to make. Ralegh is now prominent among the courtiers; he takes a leading part in the life of the Court, and the life of the Court is brilliant and occupied. The town was too small and the streets of the town too narrow for the courtiers to hold themselves aloof, as money allows the fashionable to do now; no special quarter of the town was assigned to them. They kept themselves distinct from the townspeople without the help of locality or space. The laws helped them, however, in the matter of dress. Curious sumptuary laws were still in force, which forbade any one under the degree of baron to have more than three linings to his breeches; which forbade any one whose income was less than £100 a year to wear satin, damask, silk, camlet, or taffeta, and any one who was not worth more than £200 to wear velvet or embroidery. "The English," writes Van Meteron, a Dutch historian and contemporary, "dress in elegant light and costly garments but they are very inconstant and desirous of novelties, changing their fashions every year, both men and women. When they go abroad riding or travelling, they don their best clothes, contrary to the practice of other nations." And to this craze for constant novelty in dress a contemporary poem bears amusing witness—

"Hees Hatted Spanyard-like, and bearded to,
Ruft Itallyon-like, pac'd like them also;
His hose and doublet Frenche: his boots and shoes
Are fashond Pole in heeles, but French in toes.
Oh! hees complete: what shall I descant on?
A compleate Foole? noe, compleate Englishe mon."

This fashion of dress lent wide scope to bad taste, and such books as Dekker's delightful *Guls Hornbook* show how hard gulls tried to be gallants and how ridiculously they often failed. And it gave the genuine courtier full scope for magnificence. Ralegh could wear white satin and pearls.

Not only in dress was the courtier distinct, but also in language. Fashions in speech were constantly in vogue. None was more pronounced than the fashion set by John Lyly, who wrote elegant court plays and the novel *Euphues*. Of Euphues with his instructive letters and sound moral tone Sir Charles Grandison is the direct descendant: Richardson owed as much to Lyly, as Defoe to Thomas Nash or Fielding to Defoe. But that is a literary by-path which leads to the history of fiction. His immediate influence was on the speech of the courtiers and the language of the Court. "That beautie in Court which could not parley Euphuisme was as shee which now there speaks not French." John Lyly came to Court about 1577 and was helped by Lord Burghley; perhaps the rage of affectation which he started, gave the stern Lord Treasurer a distaste for poets and was one of the reasons which made him disinclined to favour Spenser afterwards. Probably Lyly seemed innocuous enough at first, with his modest desire to lie shut in a lady's casket rather than open in a scholar's library. No one could have foreseen the frenzied fashion which he inaugurated and which with its stilted periphrases must have been

sorely irritating to the great matter-of-fact man of business. No wonder he looked askance at poets. Euphuism, as the jargon is called, has been described many times; it was the first effort in English towards ornament in speech. In itself it was wholly good; in its excess it was wholly bad.

As a fashion of speech it must have been not a little wearisome. And indeed that proved to be the case; for its place was taken about as soon as dull people were beginning to obtain the knack of it by another fashion, no less elaborate, but of a different manner of elaborateness taken from Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*. Here a jingle on one word was the effect to be obtained, as for example, "Each senselesse thing had sense of pity; only they that had sense were senselesse." This fashion set by a writer upon the speech of the fashionable finds a modern counterpart in the influence of Oscar Wilde, with this difference that his pointed epigram becomes feeble nonsense and his genius for using the right word degenerates into amiable talk about passionate neckties and purple sin; whereas with Lyly's and Sidney's manner no imitation could be feebler or more exaggerated than the original often is—not always. Lyly has real wit and fancy, especially in his charming court plays, as when he writes, "They give us pap with a spoon before we can speak, and when we speake for that we love, pap with a hatchet"; there he is inimitable.

The common task of dress and language was sufficiently elaborate to keep a courtier of average intelligence busy. And when he was equipped in mind and body there were countless ceremonies and functions at which his presence was expected. The Queen was in continual progress, and every progress was a pageant, whether by land or river, whether she were journeying

from one palace to another, or visiting a university to encourage learning, a town or a noble subject to show her gracious favour and to give her subjects the opportunity of proving by their hospitality their loyalty. She kept in constant touch with her people. And on her progresses she was accompanied by her principal courtiers, who were themselves followed by a suite of gentlemen retainers. In this excellent display of the superficial side of life—the very panoply of existence—Ralegh by his wit and by his bearing was conspicuous. He was as famous for his power of turning a neat phrase as he was famous for his power of wearing with grace a fortune in one suit. Many men were obliged to give all their attention to the brilliant outside of things to keep pace at all with the changes of phrase and habit; and would never be at ease in either. Ralègh owed his envied distinction in both chiefly to the reason that he always held them at their proper value. His nature was magnificent, and instinct led him naturally to a height which others could not climb to with the greatest conscious effort. In that he was like his mistress, Queen Elizabeth.

It is fitting that such life should be gorgeously caparisoned; there was no homespun in its disposition.

But there is another side to the picture of this Court, a second party in the Court and the country. For some fifteen years another woman had been living under restraint in England—a woman who was the mother of a king; who had been queen of two kingdoms and aspired to be queen of a third; she was of great personal power though not so powerful as Elizabeth. She was a devout Catholic and was called Mary, Queen of Scots. A large number of gentlemen had remained faithful to their religion. These Catholics were divided roughly into two classes, those who were faithful to their religion

and to their country, and those who were primarily faithful to their religion and would stop at nothing to establish Catholicism again in England. They looked on Mary, Queen of Scots, as their rightful head. The moderate Catholics wanted to make sure that she would succeed Elizabeth; the fanatical Catholics wanted to kill the usurper at once and let Mary reign in her stead.

As years passed by and Elizabeth remained unmarried and averse to the mention even of a successor, the question became acute, not in England only but throughout Europe. Spain and France were anxious to have a Catholic sovereign in England; but neither wanted the other to have the added strength of England as a dependency. Elizabeth kept playing them off one against the other with her various matrimonial schemes; and Mary was in correspondence with them, trying to exact promises of assistance. Intrigue grew more and more involved. At last matters came to a head. It became recognized, after the dismissal of the Duc d'Anjou as a suitor, that Time itself would no longer permit a marriage for Elizabeth. The Catholics in larger numbers resolved that her death was imperative and the death of her strong supporters. Elizabeth with the fearlessness of true strength had allowed Mary great freedom of correspondence in her confinement. Now she cut her off from the outside world, until a diplomatic necessity arose to know exactly how far foreign powers were prepared to support Mary, how far they were speaking their true intentions in their dealings with Elizabeth. Walsingham had spies in every influential Catholic household in England, at all the Courts and even the Jesuitical centres in Spain and France. But the information was not yet sufficient. Nothing illustrates more effectively the extraordinary difficulty of obtaining accurate news in those

days of slow travelling and messengers, than the elaborate method which Walsingham and Elizabeth were obliged to arrange at this juncture. It is a mistake to suppose it illustrates the treachery and deceitfulness of the times. The times have changed not in moral tone but in quickness of transit. Men are very much the same; but steam and electricity, the telegraph, the telephone, and a postal system have altered the aspect of affairs and the methods of conducting business or intrigue.

The plan they contrived was both ingenious and successful. With the help of one Gilbert Gifford, trained in unscrupulous cunning by the Jesuits, they encouraged Mary to open a correspondence with her confederates abroad, and they tapped this correspondence at the fountain-head. Mary was removed to Chartley, near the home of Gifford, whose family was staunchly Catholic. A brewer at Burton supplied Chartley with beer. Into the cask of specially good beer for Mary and her attendants and secretaries was fitted a water-tight box, and in this box were placed the letters. With the brewer was staying Walsingham's secretary Phillipps, a thin red-haired man skilled in cypher, and he transcribed all the letters at Burton before they were sent through an underground post, which had been carefully arranged by the young and innocent-looking Gilbert Gifford, to the Jesuit agency in London. Only six people knew of the whole scheme. Elizabeth, Walsingham, Gifford, Phillipps, Paulet, Mary's Puritan keeper, and the brewer of Burton. The brewer was evidently a man whose business instinct was fully developed. Not only did he receive large and complicated bribes from Elizabeth and from Mary, but he demanded also a higher price for his beer. This demand shocked the good Paulet unspeakably, and throws an interesting sidelight upon the moral sense of

the day, and proves that it worked as subtly then as it works now.

From this correspondence Elizabeth learned, what her strange foresight taught her to expect, that France and Spain were too frightened of each other to take any resolute step against her in favour of Mary. But it happened also that she learnt something quite unexpected and of extreme importance, and that was the plot which is known as the Babington conspiracy. She was able to thwart a national calamity and to preserve her own life.

Among the most fanatical of the Catholic disaffected was a Jesuit, named John Ballard. He had obtained a private bull from Gregory XIII., sanctioning the murder of Elizabeth, and was unremitting in his efforts to find a man daring enough to undertake the task. He travelled through England, disguised in blue velvet, as Captain Fortescue, rousing all the Catholic gentlemen to concerted action, and convincing them that Elizabeth's death was a papal necessity. Lord Arundel vouched that he could answer for the Tower, though he was a prisoner within its walls; his uncle, Lord Henry, would raise the eastern counties; Sir William Courtenay promised to seize Plymouth; Lord Montague, Lord Vaux, Lord Stourton, Lord Windsor, and many others, whose names on earth are dark, swore a great oath to stand by the cause and by themselves. Everything was in readiness for a general rising so soon as the blow should fall which should rid England of Elizabeth. The letters of Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador, show how confident he is of a complete revolution. Certainly Elizabeth had need of staunch friends whom she was wise to bind to herself by every tie her personality could fashion, and staunch friends she possessed and held in her possession.

And now the men were found at last by Ballard who were ready to strike the blow. They were men who waited upon the Queen's person. The chief amongst them was Anthony Babington, of Dethick, in Derbyshire. He had been a page at Sheffield when the Queen of Scots was first in charge of Lord Shrewsbury, and, like many other men, young and old, who came under the fascination of her influence, he was passionately devoted to her, with all the strength of devotion that a beautiful woman in distress—still more, a beautiful queen—must inevitably arouse. The spirit of chivalry which the great rival Queens infuse into these plots takes away the sordidness and pettiness which breathes from mere political intrigue, and lends a poignant majesty to the terrible dramatic end of it all. This Anthony Babington obtained the help of Charles Tilney, one of Elizabeth's gentleman pensioners, of Edward Abington, the son of her under-treasurer, of Jones, of Dunn, of Robert Barnwell, who was an Irishman on a visit to the Court, and of other young men. Walsingham and Elizabeth knew of them all, and watched them continually. Elizabeth's bravery was magnificent. Any moment she might have met death at the hand of an assassin; but she remained undaunted. Her fearlessness no doubt affected the conspirators, though quite unconsciously. They did not know that their every action was watched. Like many other young enthusiasts, they were reckless and self-confident to the verge of lunacy, and as soon as they came to realize that their plot was found out, they lost their heads completely. Abject fear took the place of their courage. They saw the resistless power that was ranged against them, waiting. They fled; but it was too late. The plot was revealed to the public. Ignominy and shameful death awaited the men who hoped to be

welcomed as the saviours of their religion, the daring knights of their queen-lady. Their names were proclaimed and the nature of their intentions. Babington had fled to St. John's Wood, which was then a "forest interspersed with farms," and from there he managed to make his way to Harrow, where he with four others lay hid on haystacks and in the straw of barns. But they did not remain long undiscovered. Amid the ringing of bells and the wildest rejoicings they were taken back to London. And very soon they were hung, drawn and quartered publicly.

How many knew of the Queen's imminent danger is not certain. Probably she kept it from her most intimate friends. Her strength was equal even to that. Nor is it known how much Ralegh knew of his mistress's danger; it is not likely that he was entirely ignorant of it, for to him was given the whole of Babington's estates, which were large and remunerative. It is certainly a last proof of Queen Elizabeth's amazing vitality, that in the midst of this dangerous turmoil of plot and counterplot which surrounded her, she was able to find occasion for the display of love and affection. For it was during these last desperate endeavours of the Catholic party that she first drew Ralegh to herself. She had seen to his advancement, and taken care that he was provided with the wealth that he needed for his position at Court and that his personal taste for magnificence desired. She had given him the Farm of Wines, which, even allowing for the money that one Richard Browne tricked him out of, brought him in a good income; and, in 1585, he succeeded Francis, Earl of Bedford, as Lord Warden of the Stannaries, and shortly afterwards became Lieutenant of the county of Cornwall, and Vice-Admiral of the counties of Cornwall and Devon. The Queen had need of staunch friends around her. And it is not due only to

a woman's whim, at which many have mocked, that she kept these men, her favourites, at Court even sometimes against their will, as when she prevented Sidney, in 1585, from heading the Virginian colonists, and, a year or two later, sent Sir Robert Carey to fetch back the Earl of Essex. Their presence became a necessity to her, because their presence helped to vouch for her personal safety. It gave her an assurance of security to see such men by her side, though doubtless their presence flattered her vanity as well. Moreover, there seems to be something exhilarating in a woman who could go in perpetual danger and known danger of murder, and yet keep to the end her woman's desire for admiration, which is the producer of many graces, and not at all in itself a proof of pettiness. It depends upon what she considers to be admirable.

The Babington conspiracy by which Ralegh was ultimately enriched brought about a crisis between the loyal and disaffected. The result of the ingenuity of Walsingham and Elizabeth in contriving the plan by which Mary, Queen of Scots betrayed herself, placed her intentions beyond all question. It was clear that she intended to stop at nothing; that she was anxious for Elizabeth's murder. It was certainly the easiest solution to her difficulties, and she was the protectress of the true religion, the head of which had sanctioned the murder. She was that most dangerous of enemies, a sincerely religious woman of great cleverness and no principles. Without discussing the ethics of murder and execution, it is easy to understand Mary's position; and it is not easy to understand Elizabeth's conduct. Mary was found guilty of high treason, and the law of the land assessed the penalty for high treason at death. But Elizabeth could not bring herself to sign the death warrant. It is

difficult to understand why. She was supported by the authority of the kingdom, but she tried to avoid this last responsibility. Her conduct illustrates the peculiar blend of craft and sensitiveness which circumstances had developed in her character, and which, be it noted, were conspicuous traits of many other great characters of the time — conspicuously, for example, of Bacon and of Ralegh. She tried to make Walsingham incur the responsibility and the odium of the deed. She abused him when he demurred at her proposal. And finally, when she had given her signature, she swore that it had been by a mistake, and Walsingham, for ever impoverished by her displeasure, retired indignant to his house at Barnelms. He became hateful to her, and nothing could reinstate him in her favour. It was as though he were a tool which she had cut herself in using, which she flung from her in anger and without compunction.

But at length the day of Mary's death came. That was pre-eminently the time of pageant and display—the display of gorgeous life in the great Court functions; the display of dreadful death in the public executions. Both were combined in dramatic intensity at this last scene of Mary's life. Hers was a Queen's death.

In November of the year 1586 her sentence was passed. For three months Europe was agitated by uncertainty whether the sentence would be carried out, and what would be the result of her death, if it were. For three months she held her ground as the martyr of her religion, an unassailable position. For three months she decked her tragedy with the robes of majesty and of pathetic grace. When Paulet tore down the regal hangings from her room, saying that they no longer became a traitress, she hung the crucifix in their place and pointed to it in silence when he came to her again.

The day of her execution was the second Wednesday in February, 1587. Three hundred knights were assembled in the hall of Fotheringay Castle. When the Provost-Marshal and the Sheriff came to fetch her from her room, they found her no longer dressed in the customary grey cloth, but clothed in a robe of black satin. Her hand on the arm of one of the guard, she passed tall and erect down the broad oak staircase to the hall. At the end of the hall loomed the scaffold swathed in black; the dancing flames of a great crackling wood fire moved light shadows across its blackness, and flickered on the bright steel of the axe which was leaning against the block. By the block stood the executioners, masked and in black. She who was cousin to the Queen of England, who was a married Queen of France and anointed Queen of Scotland, passed up the hall, followed by her six friends. Her waiting women tried and tried vainly to keep back their sobs—Elizabeth Kennedy and Barbara Mowbray. She ascended the black scaffold and sat down—smiling. Beale read aloud the sentence.

"Madam," said Lord Shrewsbury, "you hear what we are commanded to do." "You will do your duty," was her reply. Then the Dean of Peterborough endeavoured to play his accorded part, but three times he broke down in addressing her. When he at length began to pray, Mary too prayed in Latin, and at length her voice alone sounded through the hall. No longer she prayed in Latin as she had prayed at first, she prayed in English without a falter in her voice. With sublime audacity she prayed that God might forgive and bless her son, James VI. of Scotland, and her cousin, Elizabeth of England, and that He might avert His wrath from Elizabeth's country. She finished; the black mutes stepped forward. The scaffold creaked under their

Maria Stuaert Coninjnne van Schotlant Douagiere
van Vrancryck. H. Iacopsen. &c.

movement. They asked her forgiveness for what they were going to do, according to the custom; and forgiveness was granted them. "I forgive you," she said, "because now I hope that you will end all my troubles." Her ladies, Elizabeth Kennedy and Barbara Mowbray, mounted the steps of the black scaffold in order that they might help her to make ready. They lifted the lawn veil carefully, not to disarrange her hair. Swiftly they removed the black robe; swiftly they took her arms from out the black jacket, slashed with velvet, and set the jacket on one side. Dazzling in crimson satin she stood on the black scaffold, revealed in red satin between the black mutes, as she drew over her white arms crimson sleeves, which her ladies, now trembling, handed to her. But she drew them on as a lady her gloves, without haste. "Ne criez-vous, j'ai promis pour vous," she turned to them and said. She knelt and laid her head on the block: it was hard to her soft neck, so she put her hand underneath, murmuring the Psalm "In Te, Domine, confido." But the headsman moved her hand away, fearing its softness might hinder his business. Then he struck, but the blow fell lightly, and fell on the knot of the handkerchief with which her eyes were bound. He struck again, and had only to move the axe across the block to cut the last shred of skin. "So perish all the enemies of the Queen," called out the Dean of Peterborough, as the executioner held out the head at his arm's length. Only the strength of her vitality and her cleverness had kept beauty in her face. The head that was thus held up at arm's length was the head of an old and wrinkled woman. Death grinned.

As they set about stripping the body, a lap-dog, hidden in her clothes, howled and lay down crying out by the neck from which the blood was flowing. It was carried away.

Then all her things—dress, beads, Paternoster, handkerchief—were taken to the great wood fire which still burned merrily, and burned before all the people. No relics must be left.

Henry Talbot, son of Lord Shrewsbury, was given the account of the proceedings, and rode off with them post-haste from Fotheringay along the bad roads to London.

So died Mary, Queen of Scots, and her death was one of the surest, most definite steps that was ever taken towards cutting England off from papal authority. Henceforward, England stood alone. Henceforward, the force of patriotism and of religion were to be combined.

Such things happened in the time of Walter Ralegh. He may have been present. If he were, the memory of it must have come to his mind some thirty years later, when he touched the edge of another axe with his thumb and approved of its sharpness.

CHAPTER VI

THE GREAT ENTERPRISE

Scheme of colonization—Preparation—The sailing—Queen's interest—Death of Sir Humfrey Gilbert—Another charter obtained—King Wingina—Hospitality—Sir Richard Grenville—Difficulties of first colonists—Personal outfit—Misfortune.

COURT life, for all its brilliance and excitement, did not monopolize Ralegh's attention. He had gained wealth and position: he was near the Queen. That did not suffice him. He was a man of imagination, who could never rest content with the attainment which, as man of action, he had achieved. Rarely have the two qualities been so often combined as they were in the Elizabethan times, and rarely, even then, were they combined with such force and in so high a degree as they were in great Ralegh. He bent his energies on the scheme for colonization. The old idea was that Paradise lay somewhere on the surface of the world; all through the Middle Ages the dream existed. Columbus thought that the earth was probably shaped like a pear, not spherical but elongated, and "on the summit of the protuberance was situated the earthly Paradise, 'whither no one can go but by God's permission.'"

That dream continued. It came to Marlowe and obsessed him. But Marlowe dreamed of no mediæval Paradise.

> "Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed
> In one self-place; for where we are is hell
> And where hell is there must we ever be."

And his god was power; his demi-god, the man who, like Scythian Tamburlaine, lived—

> "Threatening the world with high astounding terms
> And scourging kingdoms with his conquering sword."

There was no limit set to the enterprise of man's energy; his power was measureless and divine. Only in the realm of beauty his step might falter; beyond all achievement, and all the beauty of achievement, there would always hover—

> "One thought, one grace, one wonder at the least
> Which into words no virtue can digest."

Marlowe wrote intoxicated with this elixir of infinite possibility. The sea-dogs, men of action, seemed almost to be realizing his dreams, fighting the next ship that met them, like Drake always sailing a little further on, coming home with spoils and tales of wonder, and starting out in search of fresh adventures; or there were men like Frobisher, who combined the buccaneer with the spirit of the scientist, and who were anxious to learn new geographical facts; or men like Gilbert, who were serious-minded enough to be whole-hearted in the cause of science; or men like Ralegh, in whom all these elements seem to have been struggling. This paradise of unknown lands worked in all ways upon his mind. Not Columbus before him, not Balzac after him, realized more keenly the power of money. He saw, with Gilbert and the industrious Hakluyt, the value of geographical knowledge, but what fired his imagination was the vision of another Empire across the seas, and that vision he was impatient to realize. He inspired the painstaking Hakluyt, and he quietly made it his life's purpose to further the project. It was Ralegh who grasped the true meaning of the vague aspirations

and whose personality was big enough to set the first slow forces at work. His immediate schemes failed, but without those initial failures Captain John Smith would never have succeeded, as he did succeed some fifteen years later, in founding the colony of Virginia, from which has at length grown, in the space of four hundred years, the present American nation. So are our dreams of Paradise materialized into fact.

The attempt which Gilbert and Ralegh had made at colonization in 1578 had failed.

But Ralegh, in his influential position, saw a means of turning his scheme to advantage. As has been seen, the unrest of the Catholic party was becoming more and more acute, until it reached its climax in the Babington conspiracy and the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots. Ralegh saw his opportunity. He knew as well as Walsingham that there were a large number of Catholic gentlemen who were desirous of remaining loyal to their country and loyal to their religion. The wish was as sane as it was difficult to realize. Naturally (and rightly from their point of view) the Jesuits and other Catholics, whose enthusiasm made them fanatical, hated these moderate gentlemen, and called them Schismatics. Ralegh saw how they might be employed to the advantage of his scheme, just as a few years previously, when the overcrowding of London was troubling Burghley, that overcrowding suggested the immediate material of his scheme. He suggested to Walsingham a solution of the difficulty, that these gentlemen should form a separate kingdom, should found the colony in Virginia. In June, 1582, Sir George Gerrard and Sir Thomas Peckham were empowered to do this. The new plan was set in motion in spite of Papal warnings and even Papal veto. Two ships were sent to spy out

the land that summer, and in the spring of the following year all was at length in readiness for actual sailing. Ralegh himself intended to be vice-admiral,* but the Queen forbade him to join the expedition. He had, however, constructed, on plans of his own devising, an immense sailing-vessel of 200 tons, which was called the *Bark-Ralegh* (not to be confused wth the flagship of the fleet which repulsed the Armada five years later, called the *Ark-Ralegh*). The other vessels were the *Delight*, alias the *George*, of 120 tons, "which was the Admirall;" the *Golden Hinde*, of 40 tons, "which was Reare Admirall;" the *Swallow*, of 40 tons, and the *Squirrill*, of 10 tons. "We were in number," writes Mr. Edward Hayes, gentleman, who sailed on the *Golden Hinde*, "in all about 260 men: among whom we had of every faculty good choice, as Shipwrights, Masons, Carpenters, Smithes and such like, requisite to such an action: also Minerall men and Refiners. Besides for solace of our people and allurement of the Savages, we were provided of Musike in good variety: not omitting the least toyes, as Morris dancers, Hobby horsse, and Maylike conceits to delight the savage people whom we intended to winne by all faire meanes possible. And to that end we were indifferently furnished of all petty haberdasherie wares to barter with those simple people."

On June 11 the expedition sailed from Causon Bay. The day was Tuesday. Misfortune came very soon upon them. On Thursday evening the news was signalled from the *Bark-Ralegh* that the captain and

* Professor Raleigh writes: "Ralegh, who never took kindly to a subordinate command, deserted the expedition for some reason unknown." But it is not at all probable that he ever started.—"The English Voyages," p. 58.

very many of the men were fallen sick; and at midnight, "notwithstanding we had the wind East, faire and good," the vice-admiral forsook them. The reason Mr. Hayes could never understand, he says in his account, and adds, "Sure I am, no cost was spared by their owner Master Ralegh in setting them forth: Therefore I leave it unto God." Sir Humfrey Gilbert was not so philosophic about the desertion; he wrote to his brother-admiral, Sir George Peckham, in wrath: "The *Bark-Ralegh* ran from me in fair and clear weather, having a large wind. I pray you solicit my brother Ralegh to make them an example to all knaves."

After this defection the *Golden Hinde* took the place of the Vice-Admiral, and hoisted her flag from the mizzen to the foretop. As they sailed northward they were "incumbered with much fogge and mists in maner palpable," so that great difficulty was experienced by the ships in keeping in touch one with the other. The danger of separation always threatened sailing vessels, and elaborate devices and instructions were always prepared to lessen its likelihood and to face the emergency. But on July 20 the *Swallow* and the *Squirrill* became separated from the company, and were not discovered again until the Newfoundland coast was reached on August 3. Soon after another misfortune occurred owing to the unruliness of the men on the *Squirrill*, who could not be restrained from plundering a fishing-boat. This bad act was sufficient to wreck the success of the expedition, and caused much dissatisfaction among the sailors, who were always superstitious. Moreover, the men's unruliness was a serious danger on such an expedition, apart from the question of God's wrath, which Mr. Hayes feared, and which fell upon the *Squirrill* and requited the ill-doers with death.

On August 5 Sir Humfrey Gilbert took possession of the harbour of St. John, and invested the Queen's Majesty with the title and dignity thereof. The arms of England, engraved in lead, were fixed upon a pillar of wood and erected. Men were sent to explore the land, and to make maps of it, while the ships were being overhauled and repaired. The report only survives; the maps were lost when the general died.

On August 27 they set sail again, and on the next day a great wind arose, bringing with it rain and thick mist, and drove the vessels upon the sands and flats. The *Admirall* struck; her stern and hinder parts were broken in pieces by the waves; the men leapt into the sea. "This was a heavy and grievous event to lose at one blow our chiefe shippe fraighted with great provision, gathered together with much travell, care, long time, and difficultie. But more was the losse of our men which perished to the number almost of a hundreth soules." Among the drowned was Budaeus, a learned man who was minded to record in the Latin tongue the gests and things worthy of remembrance; Daniel, a refiner of metals; and Captain Maurice Brawn, a virtuous, honest, and discreet gentleman. A few men, however, managed to keep afloat in a small boat for six days, and though two of them died of starvation, the others were rescued. This disaster brought dismay to the company and they lost courage. Winter, too, was drawing on, provisions were becoming scant, their clothes were worn out. Accordingly, Sir Humfrey Gilbert determined to make for home. "Be content," he said to the men, "we have seen enough: and take no care of expence past: I will set you forth royally the next Spring if God send us safe home. Therefore I pray you let us no longer strive here, where we fight against the

elements." But calamity did not forsake them. Sir Humfrey Gilbert did not reach home. Before the expedition sailed in June, Elizabeth for her own reasons had persisted in denying Sir Humfrey the right to accompany his expedition; but his step-brother, Sir Walter Ralegh, had continued to use his influence to obtain permission, and the requisite permission had at last been granted.

"BROTHER,

"I have sent you a token from her Majesty, an ancor guided by a lady, as you see; and further, her Highness willed me to sende you worde that she wished you as great good-hap and safty to your ship, as if her sealf were ther in parson; desiring you to have care of your sealf as of that which she tendereth; and therefore for her sake, you must provide for hit accordingly.

"Farther, she commandeth that you leve your picture with me. For the rest I leve till our meeting, or to the report of this bearer, who would needs be the messengre of this good newse. So I committ you to the will and protection of God, who send us such life or death as He shall please or hath appointed.

"Richmonde this Friday morning.

"Your treu brother

"W. RALEGH"

The letter shows the Queen's interest and concern—her attitude towards the gentlemen who adventured their lives for the glory of her kingdom. But good-hap and safety were not vouchsafed to Gilbert's ship. The will and protection of God did not send life; death had been appointed.

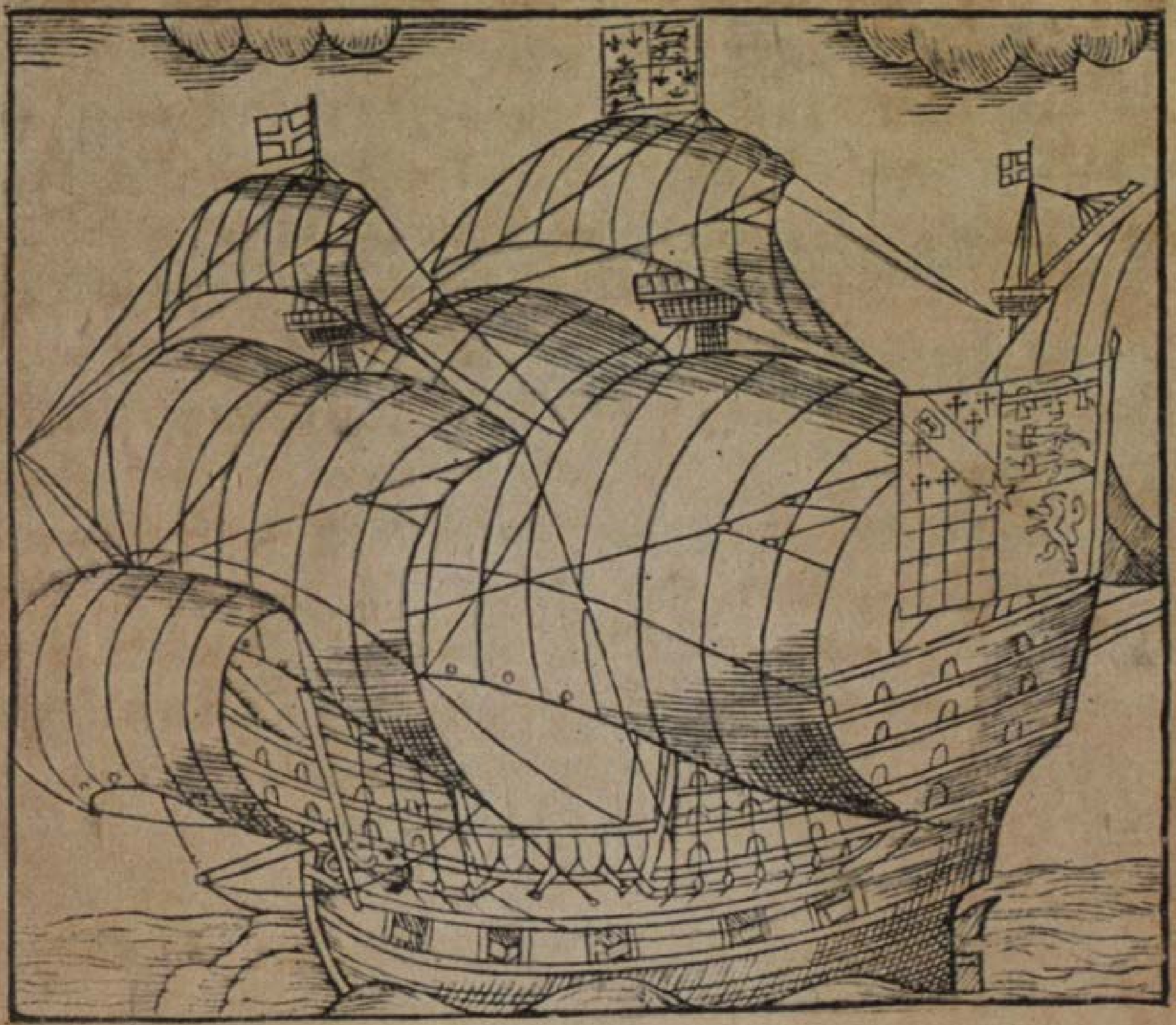
They reached the Azores without mishap, except that the general caused himself great pain and inconvenience by treading upon a nail. The last conference took place on the *Golden Hinde*, on September 3, when

he made merry with the company on board; his hopes of success ran high for the enterprise, he vowed to undertake once more the next spring. They were now coming near to England and the end of their distresses. But they met with foul weather, and terrible seas, breaking short and high, pyramid-wise. "Men which all their lifetime had occupied the Sea, never saw more outragious Seas." Upon the main-yard of the *Golden Hinde* appeared an apparition of a little fire by night. The little fire is an evil omen, and is called Castor and Pollux. "Munday the ninth of September, in the afternoon, the Frigat was neere cast away, oppressed by waves, yet at that time recovered: and giving forth signes of joy, the Generall sitting abaft with a book in his hand, cried out unto us in the Hinde (so oft as we did approach within hearing), 'We are as neare to Heaven by sea as by land.' Reiterating the same speech, well-beseeming a souldier, resolute in Jesus Christ, as I can testifie he was."

Sir Humfrey Gilbert was seen no more. Sitting abaft with a book in his hand—that was the last sight of him, and those were his last words, the great saying of a great sailor. For at midnight the lights of his vessel suddenly disappeared. The frigate was devoured and swallowed of the sea. So died Sir Humfrey Gilbert in the prime of his manhood at the age of forty-four.

The *Golden Hinde* managed to reach the coast of England, and brought the bad news of disaster to Sir Walter Ralegh, his step-brother, and to Adrian Gilbert, his younger brother.

They wasted no time in grief or mourning. They paid proper respect to the memory of the brave dead, and immediately made renewed efforts to further the enterprise to which their brother had devoted his life.



A SAILING-SHIP IN THE TIME OF RALEGH

Within six months Ralegh obtained another charter from the Queen with larger powers. He and Adrian Gilbert and John Davies were incorporated under the new charter as "The College of the Fellowship for the Discovery of the North-west passage." That was the dream of the dead navigator. Ralegh always had a greater purpose in view, and the charter was later extended by clauses giving him powers to colonize. Directly these first steps were taken, a month after the charter's final signing, Ralegh despatched two captains, Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlow.

Captain John Smith gives an account of their voyage in his "History of Virginia." (John Smith it was who, profiting by initial failures, succeeded some years later in the fulfilment of the great scheme.) "The 27 of Aprill," he writes, "they set sail from the Thames, the tenth of May passed the Canaries, and the tenth of June the West Indies: which unneedful Southerly course (but then no better was knowne) occasioned them in that season much sicknesse." His interpolation —then no better was known—is significant. It throws a clear light on the difficulties with which these early colonizers were called upon to cope; they had not yet learned the best way even of reaching their destination.

However, on the 2nd of July the two captains arrived at Florida, "where they felt a most delicate sweete smell, though they saw no land, which ere long they espied, *thinking it the Continent: an hundred and twenty miles they sailed not finding any harbour.*" That again is significant, taking into consideration the limited room on a sailing vessel for food and other necessaries. When they came to land, they had not yet the means of knowing anything about that land whatsoever. At length they discovered that they were upon an island,

the island of Wokokon. It was fertile past all belief. Grapes grew in profusion right down to the water's edge, that the very surge of the sea sometimes overflowed them. In the valleys tall cedars grew, and from the black cedars great cranes flew in white flocks, when the men discharged their muskets, "with such a cry as if an army of men had shouted together." The island was thickly wooded with other trees of excellent smell and quality; and in the woods there were conies and deere and fowle in incredible abundance. For three days none of the people were seen. On the third day, in a little boat, three of them appeared and showed no sign of fear. One of them stopped and conferred with the sailors, who gave him a shirt and a hat, meat and wine, which he liked. Then he went away; but soon returned with his boat quite full of fish, which he gave to the sailors. He had come from the mainland.

Next day the king's brother visited the ships, with forty or fifty men, "proper people and in their behaviour very civill." The king's brother's name was Granganamen. Soon after the king himself, Wingina, came. A mat was spread for him on the sea shore, and he sat down upon it. When the sailors came to him, he stroked his head and breast, and he stroked their heads and breasts, to express his love. He made a long speech, and divers toys, "which he kindly accepted," were presented to him. Especially a pewter pleased the king's fancy. He drilled a hole in it and hung it round his neck. It made him a capital breastplate, for which he was ready to give, and gave, twenty skin of deer, worth twenty crowns. He was so pleased with his bargain and treatment that a few days later he brought his wife and children on board. During all their stay in his kingdom, which was called Wingandacoa, King

Wingina sent them almost every day a brace of bucks, conies, hares, fish and vegetables. The soil was fertile, as the woods were plentifully stocked with game—for the sailors put some peas in the ground, and in ten days they had grown to the height of fourteen inches.

They had, indeed, found the Land of Promise; and the people who inhabited the land were as friendly as their king. A party went on a little expedition to the island of Roanoak, which was distant some seven leagues. There the wife of the chief man, who was absent, welcomed them with much courtesy. She had their clothes taken off and washed; she had their feet bathed in warm water, while she herself attended to the preparation of food. While they were eating, warriors entered the room armed with bows and arrows. The sailors, fearful of treachery, grasped their muskets. There was no need for alarm, however. The woman saw their fear, and ordered the warriors immediately to snap their bows and arrows across their knees.

Hospitality could go no farther. The whole account of the land "luxuriant to the water's edge, and of their joyous reception by the Indians, makes the dreams of the pastoral poets seem true," as Professor Raleigh puts it. Indeed, the people were such as live after the manner of the Golden Age. Such, too, the Burmese were found to be some three hundred years later; they had the same childlike simplicity, the same earnest kindliness; they, too, were unspoiled and happy. The Indians were regarded as savages; they were not closely observed or sympathetically described by these stout-hearted adventurers, as the Burmese have been by Fielding Hall in his notable books. Their subsequent history bears out the resemblance. The Indians, simpler, more childish people—savages in fact—came into contact

with a sterner younger civilization. Their history is known. The history of the subject Burmese is still in the making.

Captain Amadas and Captain Barlow returned in September. They brought with them two of the natives, many skins, and pearls as big as peas, which they duly delivered to Sir Walter Ralegh. He was overjoyed with the success of their voyage, and he obtained permission from the Queen to call his new land of Wingandacoa, Virginia, in her honour. He ordered a new seal of his arms to be cut, engraved with the legend, "Propria insignia Walteri Ralegh, militis, Domini et Gubernatoris Virginiae."

In the spring of the following year his colonizing fleet was ready. The command of the expedition was given to Sir Richard Grenville, the valiant, as John Smith calls him. The colony was to be under the management of Captain Ralph Lane. Sir Richard Grenville was not the man for the business, and the expedition would have had a very different result had Sir Philip Sidney undertaken its command, as it was intended that he should. Sir Richard was supreme as a fighter: his tactics were to hit first, and to hit hardest, and never to give way. He was indomitable, but more than sheer bravery was necessary for the undertaking, and more than sheer bravery Sir Richard Grenville did not possess.

The fleet of seven ships departed from Plymouth in April, and, without any serious mishap, they arrived on May 12 at the Bay of Moskito in the island of St. John's, where they cast anchor, and where in seven days they were joined amidst great rejoicing by Master Candish, captain of one of the ships which had been separated in a storm. The island of St. John was in

possession of the Spaniards. It is probable that Sir Richard Grenville hated the Spaniards more than he loved the project of colonization; for in St. John he stayed till the end of May. He built a fort, and succeeded in capturing two Spanish frigates, one of which was well freighted with treasure, and having ransomed the Spaniards of account for good round sums, he went on his way to Isabella, on the north side of Hispaniola. Here again they delayed, hoping, as it would seem, for an opportunity to attack the Spaniards in possession; but the Spaniards, overawed, as the writer thinks, by their numbers, exhibited only the greatest courtesy. So they sailed on June 7, and eventually arrived a fortnight later at Wokokon, after having narrowly escaped complete shipwreck "on a breach called the Cape of Fear."

The colony was now on the verge of plantation. But the men did not see the immense need of living at amity with the natives, that they might win their support and trust, without which their task would be insuperable in difficulty. They had hardly lived among them for two days before strife broke out, in which, of course, the Englishmen were easily victorious. For it appears that a silver cup was missed, and theft was suspected. For this trivial reason the town of Aquascogok, which was supposed to shelter the culprit, was burned, and all the neighbouring cornfields were laid waste. Enmity was thus kindled, and the fire of enmity cannot easily be extinguished.

After that Sir Richard Grenville sailed away with his convoy, and passing on his way home a richly laden Spanish ship of three hundred tons, he boarded her (note the prodigious daring of the fellow!) with a boat made with boards of a chest, "which fell asunder and

sunk at the ship's side as soon as ever he and his men were out of it." That was on the last day of August: on September 18 he sailed into Plymouth harbour, well-contented with his prize, "and was courteously received by divers of his worshipful friends."

But Ralph Lane was left behind in Virginia with his colonists, to the number of some hundred householders, and the hostile natives. From the New Fort he writes an enthusiastic letter, on September 3, to Master Richard Hakluyt. His report of the fertility of the country is more glowing even than the account of Amadas and Barlow, or than Ralegh himself could have dared imagine in his brightest dreams. "It is the goodliest and most pleasing territory of the world; for the continent is of a huge and unknown greatness, and very well peopled and towned, though savagely: and the climate is wholesome, that we had not one sick since we touched the land here." Horses and kine and sufficient Englishmen are alone needed, and no realm in Christendom would be comparable with Virginia. The men set to work to build themselves a settlement, making use of the equipment with which each man was provided.

Captain John Smith, who succeeded, some thirty years later, in erecting the colony on the ruins of these previous failures, gives an exact outfit, with the cost of each article, which a colonist would require. He could learn from the experience of others, and was wise enough to tabulate his own experience in minute lists that others might learn from him. Lane's colonists could not have been so well provided. They must have lacked many little necessaries which the wisest forethought could not have provided, they must have encumbered themselves with much that was comparatively useless.

Here are some articles of personal outfit which John Smith—and John Smith knew—deemed indispensable. They read quaintly with their prices :—

A Monmouth Cap. .	1*s.*	10*d.*	Seven ells of Canvase to make a bed a bolster to be filled in Virginia, serving for two men .		
Three Shirts. . . .	7*s.*	6*d.*			
One Waste Coat . .	2*s.*	2*d.*			
One Suit of Canvase .	7*s.*	6*d.*			
„ „ Frize . .	10*s.*	0*d.*			
„ „ Cloth . .	15*s.*	0*d.*			
Three pair of Irish Stockings . . .	4*s.*	0*d.*	Five ells of coarse canvase to make a bed	5*s.*	0*d.*
Four pair of shoes. .	8*s.*	8*d.*			
One pair of garters .	0*s.*	10*d.*	One Coarse rug to be used at sea for two men . . .		
One dozen of points ,	8*s.*	0*d.*			
One pair of Canvase sheets	8*s.*	0*d.*			

Lane's colonists remained exactly one year in Virginia. Their life was varied and exciting. At first the Indians, in spite of the silver cup and the summary vengeance for its theft, were still inclined towards friendliness. Their kings visited New Fort. Menatonou, King of Chawanook, was especially well-disposed. He was a "man impotent in his limbs, but otherwise, for a savage, a very grave and wise man, and of a very singular good discourse in matters concerning the state, not only of his own country and the disposition of his own men, but also of his neighbours round about him as well far as near, and of the commodities that each country yieldeth." Among other things, he told Lane where pearls in large quantities could be found, and Lane devised a plan for making an expedition to that river of Moratoc.

And from this plan, which Lane records in full in a subsequent letter to Ralegh, peers out the mistake in judgment which brought disaster upon this first

enterprise. These colonists had too much the spirit of Sir Richard Grenville. They were too adventurous, and esteemed the natives of too little account. Instead of quietly settling and making their base secure, while the Indians became gradually used to their presence, they must needs be hurrying further inland in pursuit of immediate and enormous wealth. Theirs was too much the spirit of the lion-hearted freebooter and not enough the spirit of the determined settler.

Misfortune awaited them. For there lived an old king in this land of fabulous wealth by the swift river of Moratoc or Moratico. Ensenore was his name, and he was friendly to the English. Not so his son Pemisapan. And at this crucial time Ensenore died and Pemisapan took his place at the head of the province, and immediately began his endeavours to undermine the little influence which the English had already gained among the neighbouring peoples. The position of the colonists became one of extreme danger in consequence. They found that they must not only struggle against the elements to secure food and shelter, but also fight for their lives against the inhabitants. They had expected support from England in the spring, with reinforcements of every kind. None, however, came, and probably the fear of isolation, brought about by events of which they had heard nothing, was added to their other fears. Small wonder then that, when Sir Francis Drake came to them with twenty tall ships, they should clamour to leave the perilous spot and return to England. They returned in June, Drake's fleet laden with the spoils he had garnered from the sack of the Spanish cities, St. Iago, St. Domingo, Carthagena, St. Anthony, and St. Helens. With them, too, they are said to have brought, for the first time,

specimens of the plant Nicotiana, of which Ralegh discovered the sovereign virtues, and which, in despite of King James from Scotland and his counterblast, has soothed many millions of honest Englishmen.

A fortnight after the colonists departed, fearing that they were forsaken, the ship of a hundred tons which Ralegh had stored with provisions and other necessaries arrived, and a month after Sir Richard Grenville came with three ships, and found neither colonists nor the ship which Ralegh had sent out for their relief. Accordingly, after he had searched long in vain and made certain explorations on his own initiative, he landed fifteen brave men to retain possession of the country for England and sailed home. Nothing more was heard of the fifteen brave men.

So ended the first series of attempts to found an English colony in Virginia, doubtless, efforts which themselves just failed of success, but without which the final colonization of Virginia would have been impossible.

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CHAPTER VII

BUSINESS MAN

The Stannaries—His grasp of detail—"Do it with thy might"—Estimate of squadron—Scheme of coast defence—The clash-mills of Mr. Crymes—Irish plans.

THE Virginian enterprise did not engage all Ralegh's energy in affairs. Undoubtedly it was his greatest scheme. Its eventual results were of no less than world-wide importance, for they include the American nation, they include tobacco; and without either commodity modern civilization would surely be desolate. Ralegh had a capacity for business which approached genius; and would have attained to genius had his imagination not run a little in advance of his power over detail.

In his hands the posts which he obtained were no sinecures. Proper arrangement of things in being fascinated him almost as deeply as the possible development of the embryonic.

The various expeditions to Virginia involved a vast amount of work. But during that time he was actively engaged in the management of lesser matters.

As Lord Warden of the Stannaries his duties were to look after the interests of the tin-miners in Devonshire and Cornwall. He was head of the Stannary Courts in which justice was legally administered to the tinners; and he would be obliged to see that his

substitutes performed their functions properly. For a privilege was granted to the tin-workers to have their disputes settled upon the spot in their own court, in order that they might not be drawn from their business during the long time that a visit to another court would involve. All through the time when he was engaged in great things at Court, or in great dreams of an Eldorado in South America, he always paid proper attention to the exacting little business of these tinners in Cornwall. In 1600 he writes a minute account to the Lord Treasurer, Buckhurst, and Secretary, Sir Robert Cecil, about the abatement of some tax on tin. He kept the interests of the tinners always in mind. In the same year he enters into the case of a gentleman, Mr. Crymes, who had erected certain clash-mills upon Roxburgh Down "to worke the tynn which upon that place is gott with extreame labour and charge out of the ground." But the townsmen of Plymouth objected to the mills, because they said that the mills diverted the course of their water. Ralegh went to view the clash-mills on Roxburgh Down in person, though it was the autumn of the year, and decided against the townsmen of Plymouth. If they had their way, as according to the letter of the law only they should, countless tinners would be thrown out of work. In reality no harm was done to the course of the river.

Accordingly Ralegh asks Secretary Sir Robert Cecil to take the matter from the Star Chamber, where the townsmen of Plymouth had sent it, and to let it be tried, as it was fitting that such a matter should be tried, in the Stannary Courts. "If this be suffered to proceed in the Starre Chamber it will not be avaylable to speake of her Majesties late imposicion or encrease of Custom, or to establish good laws among Tynners; when others

who can by a great purse or procuring extraordinary meanes, diminish to their power her Majesties duties and the common benefytt of the people."

Do it with thy might was as sincerely his motto in little things as in big; and this it is well to remember in protest against those who are inclined to regard Ralegh merely as an unsuccessful dreamer of great dreams.

He was Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall. Among other duties which the post entailed, was the important duty of keeping the county ready to ward off an invasion, which was a very real danger all through his period of office. His letters to Lord Burghley give ample evidence of his care and wisdom. In 1587, one year before the Armada, he sent the Lord Treasurer a letter in which he gave it as his opinion that a company of two thousand foot and a troop of two hundred should be levied from the counties of Cornwall and Devon, and should be trained to be ready for defence at a moment's notice against surprise. The difficulties of his plan he saw clearly. There was, in the first place, a feeling of rivalry between the two Duchies which increased the difficulty of combination. The Lord Lieutenant of Devonshire, the Earl of Bath, was not easily brought to see the wisdom of the plan, though Sir John Gilbert and Sir Richard Grenville, staunch Devon men, were its supporters. The merchants of Exeter were not disposed to bear willingly any additional outlay in the matter of defence, because they were obliged to pay heavily to defend their merchandise against Barbary and other pirates. Ralegh incloses a tabulated list in his letter, showing exactly how these levies could be raised, and the exact cost of the raising. The payment of the troop of horse is of much interest. The men were to

receive 1*s.* a day (the pay of an infantry man was 8*d.*). The horsemen were to be divided into four cornets: that would imply four captains at 5*s.*, four lieutenants at 3*s.*, four guidons at 2*s.* 6*d.*, four clerks at 1*s.* 6*d.*, four trumpetts at 1*s.* 6*d.* per day. He adds the charge of ammunition. "There is allowed for each soldier for this service of sixteen daies, tenn pounde of Powder at 12*d.* the pounde and is £500. Ther is allowed of matche for each soldier at halfe a pounde the daye, at 6*d.* the pounde and is £200. Of leade for each mann one pounde at 1½*d.* the pounde, and is £6 8*s.*

The whole estimated cost of training and raising came to £2163 5*s.* and unlike the majority of estimates, the one drawn up by Ralegh is as clear as it is concise.

But his best contribution to the problem of defence is a letter, written in the year 1595 to the Lords of the Council. It had been decided that "mutual succour be gyven from the Counties of Devon and Cornwall to each other," and the point of the letter is to show that Devonshire should be supplied with reinforcements from Somerset rather than from Cornwall. His reasons are well put and convincing. "If there shall any discent be made by the enymye in either county by the waie of surprise, and that the enymye doe but burne or sacke, and departe, then can nether be releeved as aforesaid, bycause there wilbe no tyme given to unite the forces of the same shere, where such attempt shalbe offered, much lesse for the drawing in of any numbers from affarr; and for any such enterpryze, where there is no purpose to hold and possesse the places gotten, each shire with 4000 men shalbe able either to repel or to resiste the same. But if the enymy dispose himself to fortyfye any part in Cornewall or to strengthen any neck of land of advantage, and thereby begyne to dryve us to a

defensive warr, then there is noe country adjoyneth to Cornwall but Devon from whence any spedy supplie maie be had to impeach the begining of such a purpose. And if ought be attempted in Devon—of which Plymouth is most to be feared, having, in one indraught, two goodly harboroughes, as Cattwater and Aishewater—then it is also very likely that the enymye will either assure Cornewall, or seeke utterly to waste yt, because yt is next his supplies, both from Spayne and Brittaine (Brittany); and hath divers ports and good rodes to receive a fleete."

He proceeds to point out the length and narrowness of Cornwall, and the extreme difficulty of sending succour to Plymouth. The river can only be forded in two places, and that by small ferries at Stonehouse and Aishe, which would be of little use for horses or ammunition. Moreover, the enemy would bring "gallies" with them, which would enable them to command the river Tamar. If four thousand men were taken from Cornwall, the enemy would certainly become cognizant of the fact, and nothing would be easier for them, in that event, than to lay waste the whole shire, either by sending round a ship from Plymouth or across from Brittany. Three hundred soldiers would be sufficient.

He points out that no county in England is so dangerously situated as Cornwall, with the sea on both sides of it, and with sparse inhabitants. It is so narrow that if the enemy were to possess any of two or three straits, the men of the West would be quite cut off from the men of the East, for between Mount's Bay and the sea entering within St. Tees, it is but three miles and a half from sea to sea; between Truro and St. Pirom but five miles. He concludes the letter by making

manifest the advantages of the position of Somerset, its breadth, its richness, and lack of separating rivers.

And he set his mind to these details of his defence at the time when his mind was eager to bring down to the realm of reality those high dreams by which Guiana caused him to be obsessed. A few days afterwards he writes to Sir Robert Cecil: "I beseich you lett us know whether wee shalbe travelers or tinkers; conquerors or novices. For if the winter pass without making provision there can be no vitling in the summer; and if it be now fore-slowed, farewell Guiana for ever. . . . Honor and gold and all good, for ever hopeless."

A great man, this Elizabethan, whose imperial dreams did not prevent him from mastering the little businesses under his hand! Visions of Eldorado did not blurr his view of Minnett or lessen his interest in the clash-mills of Mr. Crymes.

Not only was Ralegh Lord Warden of the Stannaries and Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall, but he was also what Edwards calls Captain of Industry in Ireland. The work connected with these duties was what may be looked upon as the *business* of his life. Each entailed work and responsibility which would suffice the energy of an ordinary man of business, a little above the modern average of capacity. It was typical of Ralegh's immense vitality that he dealt with them with as much thoroughness and ease as he managed his own household, and always he inspired them with new ideas and new life, even as his garden was the first in which orange-trees were cultivated. His imagination made him an originator. He was never content with the old way of doing things — he found a better. He was always seeing old facts for the first time, as though he had never seen them before, as all men of vigorous

intellect do. Consequently he trusted his own opinion, and he had good cause to trust it.

Ralegh had first become prominent by his actions in Ireland, and very soon after he had attained to eminence he was employed by the Crown in their endeavour to bring some kind of prosperity to the country ravaged to desolation by war. Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant. Six hundred thousand acres of land had been confiscated from the Earl of Desmond, and probably at his own suggestion Ralegh undertook to plant an English colony there. Others joined in the enterprise. Ralegh's share consisted of some twelve thousand acres in the counties of Cork, Waterford, and Tipperary, and he rented, in addition, Lismore Castle at the annual charge of £13 6*s.* 8*d.*, from Meyler Magrath, Bishop of the See of Lismore and Archbishop of Cashel. His tenants he had taken from men of Devon (the stamp of man he knew and approved), and his land was soon recognized as the most prosperous among all the estates which these "gentlemen undertakers," as they were called, were opening out. Fertility did not satisfy him. His acres were well forested, and an idea occurred to him by which he could turn the timber to good account. His scheme was to construct pipe-staves and hogsheads and barrel boards, and to transport them to the wine growers of Spain and France. It was a good scheme and practical. But he found the utmost difficulty in obtaining a licence from the Privy Council for their export. He was not in favour with Sir William Fitzwilliam, Lord-Deputy of Ireland, nor the deputy's cousin, one Richard Wingfield. By the time that sanction was obtained, Ireland was again in too unsettled a state for prosperity in quiet commerce, and Ralegh sold his estate to Richard Boyle,

who afterwards became Earl of Cork. He had planted many products, which his men had brought from Virginia, on the land of his Irish estate, and among these was the potato. He also tried to cultivate tobacco, but with less success.

Had Ralegh been supported during the last ten years of the Queen's reign, he would have benefited Ireland considerably by his activity, even though he was, at the same time, engaged in many other affairs, naval, political, and commercial. But he was badly hampered in his projects by loss of favour. His enemies were many, and they found pleasure in vexing him in small matters. This enmity, while Elizabeth lived, did not seriously injure his power or his reputation, but it set obstacles in the way of his projects which were just sufficient to thwart them.

Such were Ralegh's chief business activities, which were the groundwork of his life, these and the duties of Captain of the Guard, which were chiefly decorative. It is not easy to realize, in a time of great splendour, the day to day existence of the men who made that time splendid. The mind is apt to leap from dramatic moment to dramatic moment, when mighty exploits mark out a time's history like stepping-stones. When events are sufficiently great to stand prominently forth, not only in the history of the reign, but in the history of all time, the prosaic intervals of dull hard work are apt to be forgotten ; but they are the essential training, without which those events would not have happened.

The life of the man is the life of the nation in little. Just as Ralegh thought nothing beneath his notice, thought nothing to which he put his hand too insignificant not to be done with his might, so England, under her great Queen, was working and working to

collect her strength, so that, when the moment at last came to strike, she might strike with effect.

Sir Walter Ralegh, Captain of the Guard, superb in pearls and silver, whom magnificence became, did not disdain on occasion to ride for many miles through the muddy roads of Devonshire to inspect the river at Roxburgh Down, and found time to write at length to Secretary Sir Robert Cecil, his opinion that the clash-mills of Mr. Crymes, the tinner, did not harm the townsmen of Plymouth. That incident is as significant of the time's energy as the defeat of the Spanish Armament.

CHAPTER VIII

AGAINST SPAIN

Spain's enmity—The Armada—Ralegh's opinion of tactics—With Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Norreys—The privateers.

INDEED Ralegh's immense energy is typical of the time. *Do it with thy might* could fitly have been the motto of the nation. Their capacity for hard work was unequalled. The Armada was England's day of triumph. Men applaud a prima-donna on the night of her success, and are apt to forget the long years of training and privation and self-control that have preceded the glory of the moment. It is even so with a nation. The little hour of triumph is as nothing compared with the long years of life which made that triumph possible; and only the greatest artist and the greatest nation can bear the added burthen of success. England lapsed after the impulse of that great action had died away. The nation as a whole was too young and too boisterous with youth to support a victory so overpowering in its magnificence.

The triumph itself was like few in the history of nations, and events conspired to lend a vivid dramatic colour to its greatness.

The time had come when Philip the Second at last decided that the insolence of England must be punished. The exploits of men like Hawkins and Drake and Ralegh and Frobisher were becoming intolerable, and

though Elizabeth had at first given no sanction to their enterprises, treating them much as she had treated the English supporters of the Protestant cause in France, yet the knighthood of Drake on the deck of his own ship at length declared the bent of her sympathy. The time had come for action: and the time seemed specially favourable to Philip. Sextus the Fifth was Pope, and he had created the league for the subversion of heresy, and the arch-heretic of Europe must be put away. The Prince of Parma was in the Netherlands ready to invade England. The Catholics in England would be united by the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, and the Protestants themselves would be averse to the surrender of the throne to her son and his Scotch followers. So Philip thought, and slowly set the immense machinery of preparation to work.

Elizabeth possessed remarkable foresight and a remarkable dislike for definite action. Her foresight was as uncanny as an instinct, or her power of dissimulation, which is the art of diplomacy. Accordingly, it is probable that her efforts for peace, and the treaty which she patched up with the Prince of Parma, did not arise from any fear of war, but were a clever design to increase the proud confidence of the enemy by making him think that England was in reality in a state of panic, quite unprepared for war. She knew well of the preparations, and of their huge scale. Drake had sent news to Lord Burghley: "Assuredly," he wrote, "there never was heard of or known so great preparations as the King of Spain hath and daily maketh ready for the invasion of England." With daring he sailed into the very harbour of Cadiz and damaged more than a hundred tall ships. He was forbidden to do further damage. Spain's enterprise was not destined to be strangled at home.

Elizabeth's fear, if her fear existed, allowed Philip to spend untold sums of money on his fleet, and to adorn it with the flower of his nobility, and allowed England to overcome her enemy in the full ostentation of his display. Certainly Lord Howard of Effingham, Admiral of the Fleet, knew nothing of Elizabeth's intentions, nor did Sir John Hawkins, the paymaster. They wrote angry letters to Walsingham when the movements of their ships were confined, and some of their men disbanded. "Never," wrote Lord Howard, "never since England was England was there such a stratagem and mask made to deceive us as this treaty." And Sir John Hawkins was even more vehement: "We are wasting money, wasting strength, dishonouring and discrediting ourselves by our uncertain dallying." Naturally they desired to repeat Drake's exploit, to run every risk, like brave Englishmen, and to crush the Spanish fleet in the Spanish harbours. But they must wait. Elizabeth's fears or Elizabeth's diplomacy (conscious or unconscious in its working a strange instinct for the good of England was here) determined another course of action. "The Queen took upon herself the detailed management of everything. Lord Howard's letters prove that she and she only was responsible," as Froude, who accepts the view of her perverseness and levity, declared.

Meanwhile the King of Spain's preparations were at length completed. The galleons, "built high like castles," had been baptized each with the name of a saint, St. Matthew, St. Philip, St. John, ceremonially, as it was fitting that vessels about to fight for the Catholic cause should be baptised. The one hundred and twenty-nine vessels of the Armada, galleons and galleasses, set sail. They were strong only in pride and in the sense of their cause's sacredness.

Their vessels were unwieldy and old-fashioned, their ammunition was insufficient, and their admiral was high-born but incapable. For the veteran Don Alvarez de Baçan, Marquis of Santa Cruz, had died suddenly, and his place had been taken by the Duke of Medina Sidonia. On July 19 the Armada was reported off Plymouth. Beacons lit from hilltop to hilltop flamed the news to London.

The English fleet was ready. "Their ships had warped out into the Sound on the evening of the 19th: on the 20th they had plied out, to windward, against a fresh south-westerly breeze; and the Armada running to the eastward all night had, by daybreak on the 21st, given the English the weather-gage for which they had been working."

On the afternoon of the 21st the battle began. The *Ark-Ralegh*, built on Sir Walter's own design, in which was the Lord High Admiral, Howard of Effingham, and three other ships sailed along the rear of the Spanish line, sending quick volleys into the great vessels, and sailed back. The Spaniards vainly tried to grapple with them: the English ships were too swift and easily manœuvred. And then, on the very opening of the long battle, the Spaniards recognized their weakness, that their great vessels were cumbrous, and so crank that their cannon sent their balls on the weather side high into space, and on the lee side very nearly plump into the water. For a week (there was little sleep for the men during that week) the fleets fought down the Channel till the Spanish fleet lay at last at Calais, but not for long. The English sent fire-ships among them and drove them out. "This great preparation," writes Bacon, "passed away like a dream. The Invincible Navy neither took any one barque of ours neither yet

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once offered to land; but after they had been well beaten and chased, made a perambulation about the Northern seas, ennobling many coasts with wrecks of mighty ships; and so returned home with greater derision than they set forth with expectation."

Two things are specially worthy of notice about this great battle. The first is the continued ignorance of the commanders of various English ships as to the actual damage which had been inflicted upon the enemy. They had, of course, only their unaided eyes to trust to, and great difficulty in announcing news from ship to ship. Lord Howard writes as late as August 8: "Although we have put the Spanish Fleet past the Firth, and I think past the Isles, yet God knoweth whether they go to the Nase of Norway or into Denmark or to the Isles of Orkney to refresh themselves and so to return." And Drake, too, wrote on the evening of the battle: "God hath given us so good a day in forcing the enemy so far to leeward, as I hope in God the Prince of Parma and the Duke of Sidonia shall not shake hands this few days."

And the second point is that though the English loss was small during the actual days of the battle, yet the strain and the food and the sanitation were such that directly they came to port, a frightful epidemic broke out among the men, who died, we are told, by hundreds in consequence.

In the actual fighting Ralegh probably took no part. When the first news came of the Armada's approach, he was in Ireland, attending to his duties as Mayor of Youghal. With the utmost speed at that time possible he sailed from Ireland and rode to the English coast. Certain it is, however, that he arrived too late for any official post to be assigned him, for the battle had been in

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progress for two days before his arrival. But many private gentlemen joined the fleet in craft hastily equipped for warfare, and it would be a thing to wonder at if Ralegh was behindhand when such doings were happening. No positive information is, however, forthcoming. Only it is known that the Lord High Admiral's ship was built from designs which Ralegh had matured, and that he agreed completely with the plan of the Lord High Admiral's attack. Many an evening Drake and Effingham and Ralegh would have spent in discussing the tactics of sea-battles, proud, as they well might be, of the swiftness and ease with which an English ship could be manœuvred in comparison with the large unwieldiness of the carracks of Spain, who still considered herself (God help her) mistress of the sea.

In his "History of the World" occurs a passage about the tactics employed by the English against the Armada. There is a strong element of pathos in the idea of the man shut up in the little room in the Tower of London (he could watch the ships making their way down the Thames) writing of this great action, which he had seen, and writing with ardour, which nothing could extinguish. He had been recounting a fight between Roman vessels, heavy and slow, and the swift African galleys. Then he bursts out into this great paragraph of reminiscence, as though once again he were convincing some obstinate fellow of the patent rightness of the plan of attack.

"Certainly, hee that will happily perform a fight at sea must be skilful in making choice of vessels to fight in: he must beleeve that there is more belonging to a good man of war upon the waters, than great during; and must know that there is a great deale of difference betweene fighting loose or at large, and grapling. The guns of a slow ship pierce as well, and make as great

holes, as those in a swift. To clap ships together without consideration, belongs rather to a madman than to a man of warre: for by such an ignorant braverie was Peter Strozzi lost at the Azores when he fought against the Marquesse of Santa Cruz. In like sort had the Lord Charles Howard, Admirall of England beene lost in the year 1588, if he had not been better advised than a great many malignant fooles were, that found fault with his demeanour. The Spaniards had an armie aboord them; and he had none; they had more ships than he had and of higher building and charging; so that had he intangled himself with those great and powerfull Vessels, he had greatly endangered this Kingdom of England. . . . But our Admirall knew his advantage, and held it: which had he not done, he had not beene worthy to have held his head. Heere to speake in generall of sea-fight (for particulars are fitter for private hands than for the Presse) I say, That a fleete of twentie ships all good sailers and goode ships have the advantage on the open Sea, of an hundred as good ships, and of slower sayling. For if the fleete of an hundred saile keep themselves neere together in a grosse squadron: the twentie ships charging them upon any angle, shall force them to give ground and to fall back upon their owne next fellowes: of which so many as intangle, are made unserviceable or lost. Force them they may easily, because the twentie ships, which give themselves scope, after they have given one broad side of Artillerie, by clapping into the winde, and staying, they may give them the other: and so the twentie ships batter them in pieces with a perpetuall vollie; whereas those, that fight in a troop, have no roome to turn and can alwaies use but one and the same beaten side."

And this is precisely what had taken place in the

Armada. It is interesting to know that there was divergency of opinion about the proper tactics to follow, and it would be still more interesting to know who the "malignant fools" were, to whom Ralegh refers. Men who confuse the strategy of war with their own idea of manliness, are common to all times, and must indeed be the most desperate fellows for a proper soldier to convince. You can hear them saying, with that dreadful assumption of finality with which the pompous imbecile seems gifted, those runaway tactics may be very well for buccaneers, but are they seemly for the ships of the navy of England? Small wonder the memory of them once more exasperated Ralegh in his prison-room to renewed anger.

Before the Armada there had been many privateering expeditions against Spain on different waters; after the Armada these expeditions naturally became even more numerous, when they possessed the prestige of the Crown's authority.

Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Norreys were sent with a small fleet to reinstate Don Antonio on the throne of Portugal which had lapsed into the possession of Philip of Spain. Ralegh went on that expedition, which failed to attain its object but captured sixty Hanseatic vessels, laden with victual and ammunition, which report said, were intended to provision a new Armada.

Reprisals against Spain became the vogue, into which Ralegh threw himself with spirit. Every man whom money and opportunity favoured, fitted out his ship to spoil the Egyptian. The Queen's person, forsooth, was not to be harmed: she was to be conveyed to his Holiness the Pope at Rome? Such things, men knew, were said with happy confidence before the Armada, and

such things, remembered and repeated, spurred Englishmen on to activity in which the hope of personal gain was small in comparison with the fury of personal resentment that their Queen should be so lightly valued and thought to be so sorrily championed. Nor did they always discriminate nicely between the nationality of ships which they waylaid. Ralegh, as Vice-Admiral of Devon, often received instructions to see to the restitution of ships to subjects of the French King; and a ship of his own had taken "two barks of Cherbourg from two of the French King's subjects." There is a wild recklessness in the exploits of these years; these gentlemen of England, whose names sound through history, exulted: and there is much in their exultation that resembles the behaviour of schoolboys rejoicing in an unexpected half-holiday in spring. The grave way in which their doings are recorded heightens by contrast the similarity. Ralegh and his men are bidden be careful "to minister no cause of grief unto any of the (French) King's subjects, in respect of the good amity and correspondence between Her Majesty and the French King, their realm and subjects." Austerely the records run; austerely, too, is related her Majesty's desire that a certain perfect waistcoat, the fame of which had reached her ears, should be put on one side for her Majesty's personal use.

They had the godlike capacity of remaining young, these Elizabethans; they did not outgrow their taste for splendid waistcoats. And the world found them irresistible.

CHAPTER IX

RALEGH AND SPENSER

Rise of Essex—Ralegh retires to Ireland—At Kilcolman—At Youghal—Friendship with Spenser—Brings Spenser to Court—Their dreams.

IN 1588 Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, died. His influence with the Queen had for some years been decreasing, and there is a report, which bears the likelihood of truth, that he had summoned to Court his stepson Robert, the young Earl of Essex, in order that he might counteract the growing influence of Ralegh. Be that report true or false, young Essex came to Court about the year 1587, and his youth and spirit took the Queen's fancy mightily. Essex was as arrogant as his stepfather. Elizabeth was now an old woman in years and in appearance. She felt that her power as a woman was leaving her, and that drove her to make a last effort to regain it, defying age then as she defied death later. She cared for decorum less than she cared for life. That is the pathetic side of her immense vitality, if the word pathetic can ever be used of such a woman. She felt that she could take something of the youth which had left her, from the boy: he was little more than a boy. To his natural arrogance was added the arrogance of youth. He, too, was capricious and wilful, even as the old Queen was capricious; but he gained charm, and the Queen lost dignity thereby.

There was rivalry between Essex and Ralegh, who

could not endure this spoiled boy. His impertinence to the Queen was distasteful to one who, like Ralegh, knew the meaning of reverence, and was able to understand greatness. This abasement of his sovereign lady hurt him, and he had no faith in Essex, neither in his character nor in his ability.

Small wonder, then, that Ralegh fell into disgrace, and in 1589 he went to Ireland to attend to his Irish estates. Gossip said, My Lord of Essex had chased him from the Court. The boy took his position with intolerable seriousness: he had even challenged Ralegh to mortal combat, and it was necessary to hush the matter up that the Queen might not hear of it. Ralegh went. Destiny led him to Kilcolman Castle, where Edmund Spenser was living.

But first he probably went to the Warden's house of the College of Youghal: the house was dear to him because it resembled the manor-house at Budleigh-Salterton, where he was born. The house was long and low; and the rooms were lined with small panels of Irish oak.* A large dining-room is on the ground floor, from which runs a subterranean passage connecting the house with the old tower of St. Mary's Church. In one of the kitchens the ancient wide arched fireplace remains. Sir Walter Ralegh's study had fine dark wainscot, deep, projecting windows, and a richly carved oak mantelpiece, which rose to the full height of the ceiling. The cornice rested upon three figures—of Faith, Hope, and Charity, and the rest of the structure was covered with dexterous carving, circular-headed panels, and strangely wrought emblematical devices. His bedroom adjoined the study: in it, too, was a carved mantelpiece of oak, and in the

* From the description by Rev. Samuel Hayman, historiographer of Youghal, 1852.

fireplace Dutch tiles, four inches square. Behind the wainscoting of this room was a recess, in which a part of the old monkish library was hidden at the time of the Reformation. Here Ralegh worked, taking notes, perhaps, for the great history which he was to write later: here he read Peter Comestor's "Historia Scolastica;" and a black-letter book, printed at Mantua in 1479, which tells of the events of the world from the Creation to the days of the Twelve Apostles. It is pleasant to brood upon the change from the turbulent Court life to the quiet of this monastic retreat at Youghal—the little town in Ireland of which the illustrious courtier was mayor. Not only in black-letter quartos was he interested, but also in the garden. He planted great yellow wallflowers and cedars and tobacco and Affane cherry trees: potatoes he introduced, and they were cultivated all through Munster. You can read, too, in a *Gentleman's Magazine* of some ninety years ago: "Potatoes were first planted here (that is, in Lancashire), having been brought from Ireland to England by the immortal Ralegh." The writer must have had a tooth for potatoes, he is spurred to such enthusiasm over the matter. *Il faut cultiver le jardin.*

And at Kilcolman Castle Edmund Spenser was living, conscious of the loneliness of the country.

"One day (quoth he) I sat (as was my trade)
Under the foote of Mole, that mountain hore
Keeping my sheepe amongst the cooly shade
Of the greene alders by the Mullaes shore:
There a strange shepheard chaunst to find me out,
Whether allured with my pipes delight,
Whose pleasing sound yshrilled far about
Or thither led by chaunce, I know not right:
Whom when I asked from what place he came,
And how he hight, himself he did ycleepe
The Shepheard of the Ocean by name,
And said he came far from the main-sea deepe.

He sitting me beside in that same shade,
Provoked me to plaie some pleasant fit;
And when he heard the musicke which I made,
He found himselfe full greatly pleased at it:
Yet, oemuling my pipe, he took in hond
My pipe, before that oemuled of many,
And played thereon; (for well that skill he cond;)
Himself as skilfull in that art as any.
He piped, I sung; and, when he sung, I piped.
By chaunge of turnes, each making other mery;
Neither envying other, nor envied,
So piped we, untill we both were weary."

That is Spenser's account—a very pretty account—of the time which he spent with Ralegh. It is written in "Colin Clouts Come Home Againe." They had, of course, met before, as young men and soldiers by Smerwick, when Spenser was secretary to Lord Grey of Wilton. But now many years had passed by: they met again, and knew that they were friends. The movement of a leaf is enough to show the direction of a large wind: and a phrase may point the attitude of a friendship between two men. A sentence thus pregnant occurs in Spenser's dedication to his pastoral account of his visit to London. With a whimsical humour, which is characteristic of him, he writes to the right worthy and noble knight, Sir Walter Ralegh, Captain of her Majesties Guard, Lord Warden of the Stannaries, and Lieutenant of the County of Cornwall.

"SIR,

"That you may see that I am not alwaies ydle as yee thinke, though not greatly well occupied, nor altogither undutifull, though not precisely officious, I make you present of this simple Pastorall. . . ."

You can see Spenser smile, as he writes, to think of this "strange shepheard's" terrific energy: how Ralegh

came upon him when he was oppressed with melancholy and high dreams, which this melancholy did not allow him to express: how intercourse with Ralegh inspired him with new life. He would brood, too, of many things, which the memory of those days stirred up within him. For Ralegh, like Sidney, the friend of Spenser's earliest youth, was a poet as well as a man of action; and though Spenser was a bigger poet than either he was not a bigger man. The poet in Ralegh would draw him in reverence near to Spenser; and then he would break out into denunciation of the inertia which was inclined to creep over Spenser, and hold him in its long tentacles. The dreamer had a certain dependance on others. Yet almost against his will it would be that he submitted to the journey to Court, catching Ralegh's glow of admiration for his work—those three books of the "Faërie Queene," which Gabriel Harvey had told him were rubbish, but which he loved himself. He was ready to believe in their worth, too, though the dreamer could not help smiling at his friend's so restless energy, which could not allow him to sit and dream his life away, but which drove him always on to be up and doing. Ralegh was the Shepherd of the Ocean, and the Ocean (God wot) is—

"A world of waters heaped up on hie
Rolling like mountaines in wide wildernesse,
Horrible, hideous, roaring with hoarse crie.
And is the sea (quoth Coridon) so fearfull?
Fearfull much more (quoth he) than hart can fear:
Thousand wyld beastes with deep mouthes gaping direfull
Therin stil wait poore passengers to teare."

And yet it was good for the dreamer to know that the world wanted to listen to his dreams. The plaintive whimsical humour of his fancy, which fascinated Ralegh, has fascinated poets down the generations (even old Ben

Jonson, though his honesty forced him to square those shoulders of his and pronounce—Spenser, in copying the ancients, writ no language), for any one who has heard the echo even of the music of the spheres, hears it again as he reads the strange cadence of Spenser's verse. No one can realize the homeliness of his insight and his boundless imagination, without coming under the mysterious spell of the combination: that homeliness indeed gives a magic strength to the wings of his magic fancy.

The life of a dreamer is apt to be sad; if the world touches him, he finds the touch heavy and hurtful. And Spenser could not free himself from state duties which forced him to live for ever witness of the misery and savageness of the peasants, and of the country's weird beauty which made a terrible contrast to their misery. In Ireland he felt solitary and neglected: but he had time and scope for his dreams. In England he quickly felt the pettiness of the busy Court life, to which he could not accustom himself. He never found the life which was most in harmony with his spirit. He was not the man to grapple effectually with circumstances: they hurt him. Those must have been halcyon days for him when he was able to enjoy intercourse with a mind like Ralegh's, in the peace and beauty of the country. Small wonder that he was encouraged to proceed with his fairy fashioning of the perfect gentleman, which Sidney's friendship had encouraged him to begin.

He went with Ralegh to the Court, and both were well received. Spenser was given a small pension by Elizabeth. But the ways of the Court did not please him. He had sat too long dreaming by the green alders of Mulla's stream to take kindly to the bustle and ceremony and coarseness of that life. He must have returned with gladness to Kilcolman, and to the work

which he now knew the world deemed excellent. But he ever bore in mind one side of Court life which he describes with vividness, remembering probably what Ralegh had told him in their first long talks together.

"Cause have I none (quoth he) of cancred will
To quite them ill, that me demeaned so well:
But selfe-regard of private good or ill
Moves me of each, so as I found, to tell
And else to warne young shepheards wandring wit,
Which, through report of that lives painted blisse,
Abandon quiet home, to seeke for it,
And leave their lambes to losse misled amisse.
For sooth to say it is no sort of life
For shepheard fit to lead in that same place,
Where each one seeks with malice, and with strife,
To thrust down other into foule disgrace,
Himself to raise: and he doth soonest rise
That best can handle his deceitful wit
In subtil shifts, and finest sleights devise."

Ralegh knew this dark side of the Court life as well as Spenser knew it: he knew how some men were ready to slander a well-deemed name by lies and by forgery: how some men were pleased to creep into a man's secrecy and betray him: he knew the frequency of

"A filed toung furnisht with tearmes of art,
No art of schoole, but courtiers schoolery."

For there were many impostors at the Court; men eager to touch a great man's cloak-hem, and still more eager to raise the cry of *Treason* which should send that great man to his ruin. Ralegh, when he was well, was roused by these dangers to grapple with them: it stirred his fighting instinct and his pride. It proved his knowledge of men and tested his power of dealing with men. He liked to pass on his way with his head erect, scorning the clamour of the little men, that he might stoop the

lower in reverence to his great Queen. But Spenser looked upon this darker side of Court life, and turned away from it in disgust. He had neither the power nor the instinct to overcome such circumstances: they merely tired and offended him. He was king of the land of dreams: a leader of men he could never be. And he did not complain against his kingdom, though his waking hours were troubled by care and sorrow.

It is uncommonly pleasant to linger over these quiet months of Ralegh's life: it is pleasant to think of Ralegh, one of the greatest men that have ever lived, finding that Edmund Spenser whom he remembered well enough, was his friend: hearing him read those three books of the "Faërie Queene," and finding that his new and gentle friend was a very great poet. Each man had his dream of a kingdom: Spenser, the realm of Faërie, where he would fashion the allegory of a perfect chivalry: Ralegh, the kingdom of Guiana, which was to make his Queen mighty and his country the greatest in the world. Neither dream was wrought out to its end.

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CHAPTER X

EVIL TIMES

Ralegh and the Puritans—John Udall—Blount—Ralegh's marriage—Queen's anger—In the Tower—His sincerity—The Episode in the "Faërie Queene"—*Madre de Dios*—Robert Cecil—Sherborne.

RALEGH returned to Court in 1591, bringing the greatest poet who had yet come to English literature with him. He was able after his respite to manage circumstances once more, even that most trying circumstance of all, young Essex, and joined with him in helping the Puritans who were at that time being treated more hardly even than they deserved.

It is unlikely that their views influenced Ralegh in any way. He was beyond the constraint of any fixed creed. But he saw sincere men and honest men receiving injuries; and he exerted himself on their behalf. He was called an atheist, naturally enough; that has always been the cry against men who dared to think beyond the scope of sects' understanding. Not even Shelley was less of an atheist, however.

One, John Udall, who was an eminent Hebrew scholar, had come under ecclesiastical disgrace (dissenters are apt to be malignant to other forms of dissent—witness the hues and cries raised lately against a new Theology) by writing a book in which he pointed out the need of reform in the reformed church. The book had the

portentous name of "The Demonstration of Discipline which Christ hath prescribed in His Word for the government of the Church, in all times and places, until the World's end." The English Church was in too shocking a state to allow such a book to go quietly on its way. They laid hands on John Udall, put him in a prison at Southwark, and sentenced him to death. Something about the man's straightforwardness and sincerity seems to have appealed to Ralegh. He advised Udall to draw up a schedule of his opinions, which he promised to show to the Queen. These opinions had been twisted and exaggerated into treasonable utterances by enemies, who had thus turned the Queen against Udall; but Ralegh was convinced that he would be able to change the Queen's mind by his own influence. Essex, too, was in favour of Udall's release. Their efforts were so far successful that the sentence was mitigated to one of banishment, but while the exact nature of the sentence was under discussion, John Udall died in the prison at Southwark. The bishops could not be hurried in their deliberations. Rigorous repression begun thus early, strengthened the cause of the Puritans beyond all reasonable necessity. There is nothing to show that Ralegh was in any sympathy with their cause or with their hatred of playhouses and dancing and games. He probably did not take them more seriously than Spenser when he wrote of the Crab on which jolly June was riding.

> "And backward yode, as bargemen wont to fare
> Bending their force contrary to their face
> Like that ungracious crew which faines demurest grace."

But John Udall was a scholar and an honest man; and Ralegh reverenced scholarship and honesty, knowing the value of letters and the courage that honesty required.

Moreover he always favoured tolerance in dealing with those whose consciences gave them peculiar views, as is seen by his speech in Parliament a few years later, when he opposed the banishment of the sect called Brownists.

Meanwhile Essex had not grown in any way less arrogant. About this time a younger brother of Lord Mountjoy attracted the Queen's notice; his name was Charles Blount, and Naunton described him as "brown-haired, of a sweet face, and of a most neat composure tall in his person." The Queen seeing him at dinner at Whitehall gave him her hand to kiss, and afterwards a chessman as favour. Blount wore the piece on his sleeve, and Essex remarking it and being told whose favour it was, said, "Ah! I see every fool must have a favour now-aday." Blount challenged Essex. They fought in what is now called Regent's Park, and Essex was wounded in the thigh. "God's death," cried out Elizabeth when she heard of it, "it was time that some one or other should take him down and teach him better manners; otherwise there would be no rule with him."

And now an event of some importance occurred in the life of Sir Walter Ralegh—his marriage. His behaviour has called down much censure upon him. Macaulay invented a phrase which has had potent results, "the disease of biographers." Every man seems fearful lest he should be branded with the ignominy of the complaint; yet he must be a strange fellow who can live again with a man like Ralegh in times like Ralegh's times and not catch the fire of enthusiasm. But enough. At this point in his career, writers are wont to show their breadth of judgment: "There could have been no true nobility in the man . . ." writes one of his letter to the Queen. Fortunately ideas differ as to the nature of true

nobility. Now this is the basis of the censures levelled against him. Of the facts of his courtship very little is known, and what is known is strangely mingled with the business of reprisals against Spain, in which Ralegh was actively engaged. This is the letter which he wrote to Sir Robert Cecil:—

"SIR,

"I received your letters this present day at Chattame concerninge the wages of the mariners and others. For myne own part, I am very willing to enter bonde, as you persuaded me, so as the Privey Seale be first sente for my injoyinge the third: but I pray consider that I have layd all that I am worth, and must do, ere I depart on this voyage. If it fall not out well, I can but loose all, and if nothinge be remayning, wherewith shall I pay the wages. . . . And farther I have promised Her Majestie that, if I can perswade the Cumpanies to follow Sir Martin Furbresher, I will without fail returne. . . . But, Sir, for mee then to be bounde for so great a sume, uppon the hope of another man's fortune, I will be loth: and besides, if I weare able, I see no privy seale for my thirds. I mean not to cume away, as they say I will, for feare of a marriage and I know not what. If any such thinge were, I would have imparted it unto yourselfe before any man livinge: and therefore I pray believe it not, and I beseich you to suppress, what you can, any such mallicious report. For I protest before God, ther is none on the face of the yearth that I would be fastned unto. And so in haste I take my leave of your Honor. From Chattame, the 10th of Marche.

"Your's ever to be commanded,
"W. RALEGH"

Ralegh was anxious to stop this gossip about the relations between himself and Elizabeth Throgmorton. What they were, was entirely his own affair. At any rate he wanted Secretary Cecil to be quite clear that they would in no way affect his willingness to work as he had

always worked for his country. And so little was he "fastned" to any on the face of the earth that he relaxed no effort to forward his enterprise of Guiana, and in three years' time he set sail for Guiana, though his marriage was then an established fact.

It was for many reasons advisable to crush, if possible, the spread of gossip, and especially because the Queen Elizabeth hated her favourites to marry. As she grew old and began to lose her power as a woman, this feeling increased in violence. Whether that feeling be good or bad, is of no importance. It existed, and Ralegh knew well that it existed. Many consider that his devotion (and that of most of her courtiers) was merely based upon the advantages which he could get from the old woman: that he really flattered and despised her; that his conduct was base and unscrupulous. This view would seem to be at fundamental variance with the facts of his nature, of the Queen's extraordinary power, and of the whole tendency of the time. Not for nothing were love-sonnets the fashion: though there are men who think that fashion sufficient to prove once for all the coldheartedness and insincerity of the time.

When Ralegh returned, he was sent to the Tower, avowedly because he had disobeyed orders in setting sail at all, really because the Queen looked upon his marriage as a kind of personal treason. She detested marriage, thinking it did not improve the efficiency of a man. And Ralegh, without any treachery to his wife, whom he continued to love until the end of his life, was thrown into misery by the Queen's anger. There are men whose nature will not admit of more than one call upon their affection, and that of a limited kind. You will find that they are apt to preen themselves upon their loyalty, wisely enough. Ralegh was not made on those lines.

His feeling for the Queen was a real and vital feeling, and was not swayed by every circumstance of his life. She was a woman whom he had loved, and a great woman for all her caprices: she was his Queen and an illustrious Queen: she was Queen of England, which under her rule had crushed Spain's power. It would have been strange if her fierce resentment of his action had not affected him. As it was he wrote from the Tower—men, English men, were not then ashamed of their feelings: they liked to try and express them—

"My heart was never broken till this day, that I hear the Queen goes away so far off—whom I have followed so many years with so great love and desire, in so many journeys and am now left behind her, in a dark prison all alone. While she was yet nire at hand, that I might hear of her once in two or three dayes, my sorrows were the less: but even now my heart is cast into the depth of all misery. I that was wont to behold her riding like Alexander, hunting like Diana, walking like Venus, the gentle wind blowing her fair hair about her pure cheeks, like a nymph: sometime siting in the shade like a Goddess; sometime singing like an angell; sometime playing like Orpheus. Behold the sorrow of this world! Once amiss, hath bereaved me of all. O Glory that only shineth in misfortune, what is becum of thy assurance? Al wounds have skares, but that of fantasie, all affections their relenting, but that of womankind. Who is the judge of friendship but adversity? or when is grace witnessed but in offences? There were no divinety, but by reason of compassion; for revenges are brutish and mortall. All those times past,—the loves, the sythes, the sorrows, the desires, can they not way down one frail misfortune? Cannot one dropp of gall be hidden in so great heapes of sweetness? I may then conclude *Spes et fortuna valete.* She is gone in whom I trusted, and of me hath not one thought of mercy, nor any respect of that that was. Do with me now, therefore, what you

list. I am more weary of life than they are desirous I should perish; which if it had been for her, as it is by her, I had been too happily born.

"Your's not worthy any name or like,
"W. R."

There are some who see in this letter merely an artifice to play upon the senile affections of a doting woman. They write nimbly of true nobility: they describe the deterioration of an old woman's body; they ask, could a man care for such a person? and assert that all Ralegh desired was money and appointments. Their point of view is wearisome and false: it leaves the bad taste that the report of divorce-court proceedings leaves —with that pettiness and familiarity, which is disgusting.

Meanwhile Ralegh remained in prison: and his enemies triumphed at his downfall.

It is refreshing to read Spenser's account of the story, written a little after the event, as an episode of the "Faërie Queene." It clears the air with its gentleness and that sweet mingling of humour and sadness.

Belphœbe has left the squire with Amoret, and comes back.

"There she him found by that new lovely Mate
Who lay the whiles in swoune, full sadly set,
From her faire eyes wiping the deawy wet
Which softly stild and kissing them atweene,
And handling soft the hurts which she did get: . . .

"Which when she saw with sodaine glauncing eye,
Her noble heart, with sight thereof was fild
With deep disdaine and great indignity,
That in her wrath she thought them both have thrild
With that selfe arrow which the Carle had kild:
Yet held her wrathfull hand from vengeance sore:
But drawing nigh, ere he her well beheld,
'Is this the paith?' she said—and said no more
But turned her face and fled away for evermore."

He smiles a little at the intensity of the squire's grief, but makes no hint at his insincerity, and he could have done so quite easily without injuring his friend, Ralegh. All through the character of Timias the Squire, he dwells on the impetuosity of his feeling with kindly humour. For Spenser must have often teased Ralegh on that terrible restless energy which drove him from experience to experience, and from the height of enthusiasm to the depth of despair. "Do it with thy Might" was a singularly characteristic device.

> "And his faire lockes, that wont with ointment sweet
> To be embalm'd, and sweat out dainty dew,
> He let to grow and griesly to concrew,
> Uncomb'd, uncurl'd, and carelesly unshed."

His wife was a lady named Elizabeth Throgmorton, daughter of Sir Nicholas Throgmorton. Much is not known of her: enough, however, is known to prove that she was a woman of character and attainments. The marriage, in spite of its inaugural storm, was a success.

Ralegh's imprisonment occurred when he was busily engaged in fitting out expeditions against the Spaniards to command the trade-route through the Azores. In 1591 a rough squadron had been despatched under Lord Howard; but the enemy had got wind of it, and had sent a powerful fleet to protect their vessels. Of this Lord Howard heard in time to avoid disaster; he weighed anchor from Flores where he was anchoring, and escaped. Sir Richard Grenville, however, refused to fly: with his small ship the *Revenge* he awaited the attack, and the full fury of the Spanish Fleet fell upon him. His resistance was as gallant as his disobedience had been audacious. Ralegh wrote a superb account of his friend's

undaunted valour, and his friend's death spurred him on to renewed enterprise against the Spaniards.

In the following year, 1592, he took the chief part in an expedition which, under his management, was far more successful. "Sir Walter Ralegh," writes Hakluyt, "upon commission received from her Majesty for an expedition to be made to the West Indies, slacked not his uttermost diligence to make full provision of all things necessary, as both in his choice of good ships, and sufficient men to performe the action evidently appeared. For his shippes, which were in number 14 or 15, those two of her Majesties, the *Garland* and the *Foresight* were the chiefest; the rest either his owne or his good friends or adventurers in London." Sir John Burrough was in command, and under him was the stern Sir Martin Frobisher, whose rigour even the hardiest sailors disliked. Contrary winds prevented the fleet from sailing for some weeks from the western ports where they were anchored; and the Queen, disliking the delay, recalled Ralegh. But Ralegh, being deeply involved in the enterprise, did not obey her first summons. The wind at length became favourable; and he set sail. But when they were, on May 11th, off Cape Finisterre, "a tempest of strange and uncouth violence" arose, and Sir Walter himself in the *Garland* was in danger of being swallowed up by the sea. The storm did much damage to the vessels. Moreover, they had learned from two ships homeward bound for London, that no Spanish vessel would move that year, and that the hope of plunder in the West Indies was small. Accordingly, Ralegh determined to divide his fleet into two squadrons, one under the command of Sir John Burrough, and one under the command of Sir Martin Frobisher, and to lie in wait, the first at the Azores, the second by the

Spanish coast "to amuse the home fleet." He himself then returned home, and forthwith on his arrival was imprisoned in the Tower of London.

On August 3rd, an immense Spanish galleon, the *Madre de Dios*, was sighted by Captain Thomson, in *The Dainty*. He immediately attacked, and was beaten off with some loss, until Sir John Burrough came up with the *Roebuck*, and the attack was resumed at close range. Still, however, the galleon held her own: Sir R. Cross then sailed up in the *Foresight*, and Sir John Burrough conferred with him as to the best course to pursue. At all costs they must prevent the Portuguese from taking her to shore and firing her, as they had fired the *Santa Cruz*, a few months earlier. They decided to board the *Madre de Dios*. Their first attack was repulsed: the galleon slowly kept on her way to the island. Then Sir R. Cross encouraged his men to make a final attempt. For three hours they fought on alone, when two ships of the Earl of Cumberland arrived, and the galleon was at length taken.

Naturally there was considerable anger among the men of Ralegh's fleet, when the Earl of Cumberland's captains demanded their share of the spoils. Feeling ran high between both parties, and many valuables were stolen, for the galleon was beyond all belief, rich in treasure. And when, on the eighth of September, they arrived with the capture at Dartmouth, and learned that Ralegh was in the Tower, the disorder grew perilously near to mutiny. Ralegh's presence became a necessity, and he was released. He went to the West as a State prisoner. Sir Robert Cecil preceded him.

News of the treasure on the captured ship had spread far and wide: and a proclamation was issued throughout the towns in Devon and Cornwall "that all passengers

should be stopped, and that all trunks, carriers, packs, hampers, cloak-bags, portmanteaus, and fardells, that are likely to have in them any part of the goods lately arrived in the ports of Dartmouth or Plymouth in a Spanish carrock . . . should be stayed and searched." For the galleon, besides jewels and bullion, contained spices, drugs, silks, calicoes, carpets and quilts, to the value of about £150,000.

So, Cecil writes in a letter to his father, that "Whomsoever I met by the way within seven miles, that either had anything in cloak-bag, or in mail, which did but smell of the prizes (for I assure your Lordship I could smell them almost, such hath been the spoils of amber and musk amongst them) I did, though he had little about him, return him with me to the town of Exeter . . . I have taken order to search every bag or mail coming from the West . . . My Lord, there never was such spoil! I will suppress the confluence of these buyers, of which there are above two thousand. And except they be removed there will be no good . . . Fouler ways, desperater ways, nor more obstinate people did I never meet with . . . Her Majesty's captive comes after, but I have outrid him."

And in a second letter, written a few days later, he describes Ralegh's arrival, and the enthusiastic welcome which his men of Devon gave him: "I assure you, Sir, poor servants to the number of a hundred and forty goodly men, and all the mariners came to him with such shouts and joy, as I never saw a man more troubled to quiet them in my life. But his heart is broken, for he is very extreme pensive longer than he is busied, in which he can toil terribly."

Ralegh himself came very badly out of the division (probably through the cleverness of Robert Cecil), and he

ROBERT. CECILIUS.
Com. et Mag. Re. Ang. Thesaurarius

did not scruple to write very frankly to Lord Burghley his opinion of the business. "The Erle of Cumberland is allowed £36,000, and his accompt came but to £19,000: so as he hath £17,000 profytt, who adventured for himselfe; and we that served the Queen and assisted her service, have not our own again. Besides I gave my ship's sayles and cables to furnish the Caraque and bring her home, or else she had perished: my ship first bourded her, and onely staid with her; and brought her into harborough or else she had perished uppon Silley. I was not present, and therefore had no extraordinary profytt: I was the cause that all this came to the Queene . . . I that adventured all my estate, lose of my principall and they have double . . ."

Robert Cecil was one of the few Elizabethan men with any pretence to greatness who was before all else designing and crafty. He had a genius for cold scheming. About this time he began to realize that Ralegh was too impetuous, and too great to be a convenient friend. And so he quietly set about to sap Ralegh's influence, though on the surface he remained as friendly as he had ever been, and let his son stay with the Raleghs at Sherborne. Robert Cecil was a politician and nothing else.

And now Ralegh made Sherborne, in the county of Dorset, his centre, from which he transacted all the manifold business of his life. Here, as in Youghal, he planted trees and flowers. He thought with Lord Bacon that "God Almighty first planted a garden, and indeed, it is the purest of human pleasures: it is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of a man; without which buildings and handiworks are but gross handiworks:" even as he would think with Bacon, "It is a poor centre of a man's actions, himself. It is right earth; for that

only stands fast upon his own centre, whereas all things that have affinity with the heavens, move upon the centre of another, which they benefit." For he was working towards the realization of his great dream, which would bring prosperity and wealth once for all to England and England's greatest Queen, Elizabeth. He now had all the things which are wont to make for comfort and contentment: but he was not a man for whom ease had any attraction. He strained every effort, even amidst the peace and beauty of the country which he loved, to the arduous enterprise which he had set himself—to explore the little-known country of Guiana—an enterprise in which many brave men were known to have lost their lives.

CHAPTER XI

THE KINGDOM IN GUIANA

Ralegh leaves England — Arrives at Trinidad — Taking of S. Joseph—Interviews with Berreo—Dealings with natives—Starts up the river in boats—Dangers overcome—Adventures—They reach River Amana—Indian village—Within sight of Guiana—Toparimaca—Beauty of the land—Falls of the Caroli—The return —Voyage home—Arrival in England.

ALTHOUGH travel was slow and involved great physical endurance, there was never a time when men less loved their homes and firesides. The scene again changes. Many things called Ralegh; the spirit of unrest was always strong in him; he was always longing to get right away. The little things of life pressed upon him, and drove him to seek respite and quiet in the Unknown. And the Unknown held for him immense possibilities; the kingdom he desired to establish haunted his imagination more imperiously even than the actual release from the life and surroundings which quickly to his spirit became dull and commonplace. His nature was too high bred to endure with patience, until it was confronted by the inevitable; and there was very little that to his nature was inevitable. The barriers that would have stopped a smaller nature were pushed on one side by him, and even when Fate held him fast, he ultimately triumphed by turning his bondage to magnificent account. The spirit of life was with him always stronger than his fear of being called a coward,

stronger even than his pride. And always when he at length realized a thing to be inevitable, he faced it at his full stature.

He had lived the life of the courtier, he had fought against Spain, he had attended to the numberless duties in Devonshire, in Cornwall, in Ireland; everything was becoming wearisome to him, and while he was unconsciously losing interest in his life, he was also losing his power over others. He was in disfavour. He was prouder than the proud men amongst whom he lived, and in consequence he had many enemies, who longed to humble his pride. He grew tired of the life; his imagination moved ever in advance of the present, and kept him ever unsatisfied and alert. In himself rather than in the influence of others lay the primary reason for his loss of favour. It is almost invariably so with a great personality even when he is himself unconscious of the cause.

He put all his energy into making preparations for carrying out his project of founding a new kingdom in Guiana. If he were successful, fortune would be remade, and favour would be regained. The prospect was exciting, but more alluring than the excitement was the knowledge that the sea and the unknown would bring to his soul immediate peace; that new sights, new dangers, and new interests would soothe his mind, fretted by the immanent pettiness of passing days. Change is the law of life, and Ralegh was immensely alive. Such a nature as his must always find expression for itself, must find scope and occupation for its greatness, or the spirit preys upon itself and pines into uneasiness. Whatever the force be from which vitality comes, brain or blood or soul, that force is irresistible. Death alone can free a man from its tyranny.

So Ralegh turned towards that kingdom in Guiana, towards "that great and golden city which the Spaniards call El Dorado," and on Thursday, February 6, 1595, he left England. The previous year he had sent his servant, Jacob Whiddon, to get "knowledge of the passages," and he had "some light from Captain Parker," but yet his journey's end was vaguely known. Jacob Whiddon and Captain Parker only conjectured that the place existed somewhere southward of the great bay Charuas, or Guanipa; and their conjecture was incorrect by some six hundred miles. Information of the kind was apt then to be inaccurate. Spaniards, indeed, knew something of this vast empire of Guiana, but naturally they kept such knowledge to their own use. That this destination was six hundred miles farther inland than he had been led to believe, Ralegh did not discover until he arrived at Trinidad, which he reached with no mishap other than the usual one of separation.

One of the pieces of gossip which old Aubrey recounts, and which is pleasant to believe, is that Ralegh was in the habit of taking many books with him on a voyage, and of reading them assiduously in his cabin. He knew Spanish well, and was conversant with the travel-lore of Spain. Among his books would surely be the "large discourses" of Pedro de Cieza and Francisco Lopez, recounting the marvels of the land to which he was making and the adventures which the Spaniards endured in conquering it.

All the terrible hardships of these first explorers had often fired his imagination, but never as now, when every movement of the ship brought him nearer to the actual scene of his endeavour. He would succeed where they had failed. And his heart must have warmed to these brave adventurers in spite of the fact that they

were his enemies. He remembered their hardships, and his own, when he wrote in his "History of the World," "I cannot forbeare to commend the patient virtue of the Spaniards. We seldome or never finde that any Nation hath endured so many misadventures and miseries as the Spaniards have done in their Indian discoveries. . . . Tempests and shipwrecks, famine, overthrowes, mutinies, heat and cold, pestilence, and all manner of diseases, both old and new, together with extreme povertie, and want of all things needefull, have beene the enemies wherewith every one of their most noble Discoverers, at one time or other hath encountered. Many yeeres have passed over some of their heads in the search of not so many leagues; yea, more than one or two have spent their labour, their wealth and their lives in search of a golden Kingdom without getting further notice of it than what they had at their first setting forth. All which, notwithstanding the third, fourth, and fifth undertakers, have not been disheartened. Surely they are worthily rewarded with those Treasuries and Paradises which they enjoy; and well they deserve to hold them quietly, if they hinder not the like virtue in others, which (perhaps) will not be found." Men who lived through the same elemental perils have something in common, and a man like Ralegh is able to realize and to express the fact; he is able to rise above the claims of nationality at a time when his nation struggled for its very life, and he with it, against the rival nation of Spain.

He arrived at the island of Trinidad, and punished, after the manner of the time, the treachery of the Spaniards against Jacob Whiddon; for the year before Berreo, Governor of Trinidad, had broken his word of truce to Whiddon, and having set an ambuscade for his

men when they landed, slew some eight of them. "So as both to be revenged of this wrong, as also considering that to enter Guiana by small boats, to depart four or five hundred miles from my ships and to have a garrison in my back interested in the same enterprise, who also daily expected supplies out of Spain, I should have savoured very much of the ass; and therefore, taking a time of most advantage, I set upon the corp du gard in the evening, and having put them to the sword, sent Captain Galfield onward with sixty soldiers, and myself followed with forty more, and so took their new city, which they called S. Joseph, by break of day; they abode not any fight after a few shot, and all being dismissed but only Berreo and his companion. I brought them with me aboard, and at the instance of the Indians I set their new city of S. Joseph on fire."

And now Ralegh shows once more his extraordinary power over other men, and shows it even more vividly than in the case of the Irish chieftain whom he changed from a leader of rebels to a staunch servant of the Queen. He wanted all the information he could obtain, and from Berreo he obtained it, though he was bitterly opposed, as might be expected, to the English and to Ralegh. A Boswellian record of their conversations would be of value to all business men.

"Having Berreo my prisoner, I gathered from him as much of Guiana as he knew. This Berreo is a gentleman well descended and had long served the Spanish King in Milan, Naples, the Low Countries, and elsewhere, very valiant and liberal, and a gentleman of great assuredness, and of a great heart. I used him according to his estate and worth in all things I could, according to the small means I had." Berreo well knew the importance of such knowledge to Ralegh; for he had spread

reports far and wide among the Indians that the English meant them the deadliest mischief, and he had announced that any native found to have had any intercourse with the English would be forthwith hanged. But Berreo, an old man, was constrained to give a full account of his journey; and Ralegh's narrative of his own expedition is punctuated by what Berreo saw and heard, and conjectured, and by repeated corroboration of Berreo's statements. Ralegh must have smiled to himself when the old man so far relented towards him as even to beg him not to venture his life and the lives of the company in attempting a task which had proved too much for his own capability. There must have been a singular mingling of affection and cunning in the petition. "Berreo," writes Ralegh, "Berreo was stricken into a great melancholy and sadness, and used all the arguments he could to dissuade me, and also assured the gentlemen of my company that it would be labour lost, and that they should suffer many miseries if they proceeded." And he went on to explain the nature of the difficulties, how the mouths of the rivers were sandy and full of flats, which could only be entered in the smallest boats; how the current ran swift and strong; how the natives were hostile, and how the kings of the natives had decreed that none should trade with the English for gold, "because the same would be their own overthrow, and that for the love of gold the Christians meant to conquer and dispossess them of all together." To which Ralegh adds drily, "Many and the most of these I found to be true."

Naturally he did not let experience alone prove the truth of his valiant prisoner's statements. He called all the captains of the island together that were enemies to the Spaniards and conversed with them by means of an

Indian interpreter whom he had brought out of England. "I made them understand that I was the servant of a queen who was the great Cassiqui of the north, and a virgin, and had more Cassiqui under her than there were trees in their island; that she was an enemy to the Castellans in respect of their tyranny and oppression, and that she delivered all such nations about her as were by them oppressed; and having freed all the coast of the northern world from their servitude had sent me to free them also, and withal to defend the country of Guiana from their invasion and conquest. I showed them Her Majesty's picture, which they so admired and honoured as it had been easy to have brought them idolatrous thereof. . . . They now call her Ezrabeta Cassipuna Aquerewana."

That was his policy always with the natives. The Spaniards desired immediate wealth, which they wrung from the Indians by all means in their power; Ralegh desired a new English kingdom, and knew that for his purpose the aid of the Indians was invaluable. And accordingly wherever he went he was always at the utmost pains to conciliate them with presents and carefully sought expressions of regard and good will. The Indian chieftains fell under the spell of his personality in the same way as the Irish rebel and his Spanish prisoner, or, indeed, any one over whom he sought from the first moment of acquaintance to exercise influence.

To estimate at its proper value the gigantic proportions of the task which Ralegh had sailed some thousand miles to achieve, it is necessary to remember something of the geography of the country which is now called Venezuela, and the innumerable rivers which there flow into the sea, forming a complicated network.

Having at length discovered from Berreo and the

natives as much as he could about the lie of the land—that is to say, about a quarter of that which an intelligent Council School teacher could have told him in ten minutes at the present day—Ralegh started up the river to Guiana, "resolving," as he puts it, "to make trial of all, whatsoever happened." He sent ships to reconnoitre and take soundings. Captain Calfield in his bark and the vice-admiral George Gifford in the *Lion's Whelp* eastward to the mouth of the river called Capuri; King, master of the *Lion's Whelp*, in his ship's boat to try another branch of the river in the bottom of the bay of Guanipa, and to see if there was water enough to admit the passage of a small ship. This branch was called the Amana; but it, like the other, presented the same difficulties. The rush of water was dangerous for a small boat, and the shallowness prevented the use of a ship. King could only make hurried investigations, because his Indian guide assured him that the natives of Guanipa, who were cannibals, might any moment attack them, and that the attack would be terrible, for they paddled swiftly in canoes and shot poisoned arrows with deadly effect.

Nothing could deter Ralegh from his enterprise. He gave instructions to his carpenters to cut down a gallego-boat, to draw five feet of water, and to fit her with banks to row on. John Douglas was sent in his barge to look after King, who had not returned, and to take careful soundings in the bottom of the bay. For old John Hampton of Plymouth, and others who had come from Trinidad, had told him dreadful stories of its danger. "It hath been held for infallible that whatsoever ship or boat shall fall therein can never disembogue again by reason of the violent current which setteth into the said bay, as also for that the breeze and easterly wind bloweth directly into the same."

John Douglas took with him an old cassique of Trinidad for a pilot, and was successful. Four goodly entrances were found, whereof the least was as big as the Thames at Woolwich, but only six feet deep. Ralegh accordingly gave up hope of finding passage for his ship, and decided to go on with the boats, and the gallego which he had prepared, and which held sixty men. In the boat of *Lion's Whelp* and in its wherry there was room for twenty men, in Captain Calfield's wherry for ten, and in Ralegh's barge for ten more. They carried victuals for a month. Among the gentlemen were Ralegh's cousins Butshead Gorges and John Grenville, his nephew John Gilbert, Captain Keymis and Captain Clarke. "We had as much sea to cross over in our wherries as between Dover and Calais, and in a great billow, the wind and current being both very strong, so as we were driven to go in those small boats directly before the wind into the bottom of the bay of Guanipa." Their pilot was an Arwacan, an Indian of Barema, which is a river to the south of the Orinoco. Ralegh had caught and pressed him into his service as he was paddling in his canoe to sell bread at Marquerita; but now the Arwacan confessed himself quite ignorant of the river up which they were rowing; he told them he had not been on it for twelve years, "at which time he was very young and of no judgment." The position of the adventurers was one of extreme danger; they might have rowed in that labyrinth of rivers for a year without finding a way either out or in, for they only discovered the Arwacan's ignorance after four days. Ralegh realized their plight to the full, and the extraordinary good fortune which drew them out of it. A small canoe was espied in which three Indians were paddling. Ralegh, in his eight-oared barge, immediately gave chase, and succeeded in

overtaking the canoe before it crossed the river ("which because it had no name we called the river of the Red Cross, ourselves being the first Christians that ever came therein"). Natives on the thickly wooded bank watched the chase with eagerness, and the captain with anxiety, fearing what might happen to their fellows. But when they saw that Ralegh treated the three with deference, the people on the shore made friendly signs and showed no fear as the eight-oared barge drew in, but offered to traffic in such commodities as they possessed.

As the adventurers stopped there for a while at the mouth of a little creek which came from the Indian village into the river, Ferdinando the pilot, who came with them originally, and his brother, must needs go to the village to drink the wine of the place, and upon him the chief men of the village fell, threatening to punish them with death for having thus brought white strangers into their midst. But Ferdinando, "being quick and of a disposed body," escaped to the woods, and his brother raced back to the barge, where he cried out panting that the Indians had slain Ferdinando. Ralegh immediately laid hands on a very old man, who was with him to serve as hostage, and if Ferdinando were indeed dead, to take his place as pilot. Meanwhile the Indians were pursuing Ferdinando with deer-dogs, and the woods sounded with their shouts; nor could the old man stay them, though he called out as loudly as he could the sad consequences in which they would involve him. At last Ferdinando reached a part of the shore and climbed a tall tree which hung over the river, and the barge happening to pass by, he plunged into the water and swam to it, half dead with fear. "But our good hap was that we kept the other old Indian, which we handfasted to redeem our pilot withal, for being natural of those

rivers we assured ourselves he knew the way better than any stranger could; and, indeed, but for this chance, I think we had never found the way either to Guiana or back to our ships; for Ferdinando, after a few days, knew nothing at all nor which way to turn, yea and many times the old man himself was in great doubt which river to take."

They rowed on through the maze of rivers and islands, which were inhabited by the Ciawani and the Waraweete, goodly people, carpenters for the most part of canoes, who dwell in little houses in the summer, and, when the river rises (and it rises thirty feet, amazingly, as Ralegh discovered), in the tops of trees. He relates their customs; how some beat the bones of their chiefs into powder and the wives and friends drink it all, that the bones may have a kindly resting-place; how others take up the buried corpse of a dead chieftain, when the flesh has departed from the bones, and hang the skeleton in his own house, decking the skull with feathers and fitting his gold plates about the bones of his arms and thighs and legs.

On the third day the gallego "came on ground and stuck so fast as we thought that even there our discovery had ended and that we must have left sixty of our men to have inhabited like rooks upon trees with those nations; but the next morning, after we had cast out all her ballast, with tugging and hauling to and fro we got her afloat."

Four days more they rowed on until they came into the river Amana, which ran more directly, without windings and twistings, than the other, and then a fresh difficulty met them. For the flood of the sea no longer gave any help and "we were enforced either by main strength to row against a violent current or to return as

wise as we went out." The men complained that the work was too much for them; but they consented to pull on when Ralegh and the other captains and gentlemen offered to take each his turn at the oar. Each spell of rowing lasted one hour. Thus they proceeded slowly and with tremendous effort for three more days, when the men began to despair; the current became each day stronger and the river appeared interminable in length. "But we evermore commanded our pilots to promise an end by next day, and used it so long as we were driven to assure them from four reaches of the river to three, and so to two, and so to the next reach." The men, too, were hungry; food was giving out; the sun was scorching, and there was nothing to drink but the thick and troubled water of the river. Sometimes they found fruits on the trees that were good to eat; sometimes they shot birds. Birds there were of every brilliant colour, "carnation, crimson, orange-tawny, purple, green watchet, and of all sorts, both simple and mixt, as it was unto us a great good passing of the time to behold them." But the men were hungry and tired. Then a pilot, the very old man, whom they had hand-fasted, said that he would bring them soon to a town of the Arwacas, where they would find a store of bread, hens, fish, and the wine of the country, if they would turn with their barge and wherries down a branch of the river on the right hand. The men were cheered at the prospect. Ralegh and Gifford and Calfield determined to make their way to the town for food; so, leaving the majority of their men at the river's entrance, they set out. They rowed three hours without seeing a sign of human life, and they began to suspect that the pilot was playing them false. It grew towards night, but still he kept assuring them that the village lay only four reaches

farther on. "When we had rowed four and four we saw no sign, and our poor watermen even, heartbroken and tired, were ready to give up the ghost; for we had now come from the galleye near forty miles."

Then they determined to hang the very old man, their pilot. But the river began to narrow. It became so narrow that the trees with which either bank was thickly covered touched branches across the water, and they were obliged to draw their swords and cut a passage through. "We were very desirous to find this town, hoping of a feast, because we made but a short breakfast aboard the galley in the morning, and it was now eight o'clock at night and our stomachs began to gnaw apace." At last they saw a light, heard the dogs of the village bark, and one hour after midnight they arrived. The old pilot had not deceived them in any way. They found good store of hens, bread, fish, and Indian drink.

Meanwhile the company which was left behind in the galley, fearing that some mishap must have come to the wherries, sent out a party after them in the ship's boat of the *Lion's Whelp*, under Captain Whiddon. But Ralegh was so pleased with the prospect which the morning light disclosed to his view, that he had rowed some forty miles farther on. For no longer was the country beshrubbed with thorns and thickets and closely growing trees. Great plains, twenty miles in length, covered with fair green grass spread out before him, "and in divers parts groves of trees by themselves (he writes with his keen eye for effects of landscape), as if they had been by all the art and labour in the world so made of purpose, and still as we rowed the deer came down, feeding by the water's side, as if they had been used to a keeper's call." But all was not beautiful and quiet. In the river swam fishes of a monstrous size, and

thousands of ugly serpents, called lagartos. A negro, a very proper young fellow, leapt from Ralegh's barge to swim to the shore, and in the sight of all the men, one of these lagartos ate him. Those monstrous serpents are now called alligators.

They came back to the great river and resumed their course, pulling ever with difficulty against the current. And again they were reduced to hunger, and again they were on the brink of despair, when Captain Gifford, who was a little in advance of the others seeking a place to land and make a fire, saw four canoes, and with no small joy he urged his men to try the uttermost of their strength to come up with them. At last they overtook them, as they paddled up a creek off the main stream, and found bread in two canoes, which they captured, and learned that three Spaniards were in the other canoes, one a cavallero, one a soldier, and one a refiner of metals. The bread roused the courage of the hungry men, and "Let us go on!" they cried; "we care not how far!" as they lit fires for the night's encampment. Immediately Ralegh sent Captain Thyn and Captain Gifford in one direction, Captain Calfield in another, to follow the men who had fled away. As he himself was creeping through the bushes he saw an Indian basket which was insecurely hidden. In the basket was a refiner's outfit, quicksilver, saltpetre, and other things to test the quality of minerals, and the dust of ore which had been refined. They could not, however, catch the Spaniards, but they discovered some Arwacas concealed in the woods who had acted as pilots to the Spaniards. Them they questioned, and one they took with them for their own pilot.

Ralegh had no mining tools with him, nor had he come for small and immediate gain. His purpose was

no other than to open out the resources of the whole country for England, not to snatch a cargo load of gold. Moreover, a month had passed since they had seen the ships. Time was precious; there was much to be done; "and to stay," he says pithily, "to dig out gold with our nails had been *opus laboris* but not *ingenii*." He stayed only to survey the neighbourhood. During his short stay the natives came in numbers to him, and with his usual policy he treated them with elaborate kindness in contrast to the cruelty of the Spaniards. He paid for everything which he used, and took every means to prevent violence to their women, and theft. If the offender was discovered he was punished before the Indians; and, more than that, if an Indian complained of a theft which could not be laid to any man's account, he was paid to the full amount of his loss.

Here Ralegh sent back Ferdinando and the very old man in a canoe with presents for themselves and a message to deliver to the ships, and the company rowed on their way, taking with them as pilot, Martin, the native who was captured from the three Spaniards. But the next day the galley ran aground, and "we were like to cast her away with all our victual and provision and so lay on the sand one whole night, and were far more in despair at this time to free her than before, because we had no tide of flood to help us; and therefore feared that all our hopes would have ended in mishaps. But we fastened an anchor upon the land, and with main strength drew her off."

Then at last, to their great joy, the mountains of Guiana rose before them, and in the evening of the same day a fresh northerly wind sprang up, and before it they passed on till they were brought in sight of the great river of Orinoco, "out of which the river descended

wherein we were." As their boats entered the Orinoco they espied three canoes manned by natives, who, when they saw the English, paddled fast away westward towards Guiana, thinking they were Spaniards. The boats, giving chase, came up with one of the canoes, and explained by their interpreter that they were not Spaniards but friends. Thereupon the natives were cordial, gladly gave them fish and tortoise eggs, and promised to bring their chief man to the boats in the morning. In the morning the chief man, whose name was Toparimaca, came with some forty followers, bringing presents of bread and fruit and wine. With him Ralegh conferred about the nearest way to Guiana, and he escorted Ralegh to his own port, and from his port escorted Ralegh and some of his captains to the town, where the captains caroused until they were "reasonable pleasant." The name of the town was Arowocai, and in it was staying a stranger cassique with his wife and retainers. Of this wife Ralegh gives a characteristic description: "In all my life I have seldom seen a better favoured woman. She was of good stature, with black eyes, fat of body, of an excellent countenance, her hair almost as long as herself, tied up again in pretty knots, and it seemed that she stood not in that awe of her husband as the rest, for she spake and discoursed and drank among the gentlemen and captains and was very pleasant, knowing her own comeliness, and taking great pride therein. I have seen a lady in England so like her as, but for the difference of colour, I would have sworn might have been the same." Toparimaca gave them a pilot, an old man of great experience and travel, who knew his way by day or night on the river, and they rowed on. Without him, mishap would have befallen them, because the river is exceedingly broad, at places extending to

twenty miles, and its course is full of wonderful eddies, islands, shoals, currents, and dangerous rocks.

They passed up the great river, sailing, for a wind rose up behind them, along the shore of the island of Assapana, past the river Europa, which poured its waters into the great river; they sailed on ever westward, wide green plains spread out on the right hand, and the banks of the river were a very perfect red. Now they must make all speed possible, for the time was drawing near when the rain would fall, and the river rising, would, by the violence of its current, hinder all further progress. On they sailed, past the high mountains of Aroami and Aio, past the great island Manoripano, until, on the sixth day, they reached the land of that Morequito whom Berreo had slain. They anchored in the port, and Ralegh despatched one of his pilots to the uncle of Morequito, King of Aromaia. In the morning, before noon, the old king came with his followers, walking the fourteen miles to the shore; he was one hundred and ten years old. A little tent had been set up on the shore, and in it the old king rested. When he was rested, Ralegh conversed with him by means of an interpreter. He explained how he had been sent out by his Queen specially to free the land from the tyranny of the Spaniards; he dilated at large on "Her Majesty's greatness, her justice, her charity to oppressed nations, with as many of the rest of her beauties and virtues as either I could express or they conceive, all which being with great admiration attentively heard and marvellously admired. I began to sound the old man as touching Guiana." They talked for a long space of time, the old king relating memories of his youth, how "there came down into that large valley of Guiana a nation from so far off as the sun slept (Ralegh liked that phrase and mentions it as the old king's own

expression), with so great a multitude as they could not be numbered nor resisted; and that they wore large coats and hats of crimson; . . . that they had slain and rooted out so many of the ancient people as there were leaves in the wood upon all the trees." When the Christians came, however, they joined forces together and lived at peace, each one holding the Spaniard as a common enemy. And as the old king talked, Ralegh marvelled to find a man of such gravity and judgment and of so good discourse that had no help of learning nor breed.

Then the old king "desired leave to depart, saying that he had far to go; that he was old and weak and was every day called for by death." Ralegh begged him to remain during the night, but he could not prevail upon him to do so; and, though the weather was hot, the old king walked back fourteen miles to his town, having promised to wait upon Ralegh on his return. And that he did not fail to do. It was not for nothing that he was held to be the proudest and the wisest of all the Oroonokoponi.

Still they sailed westward, eager to see the famous river Caroli, which led to the frontiers of the people who were most hostile to Tuga, the Emperor of Guiana, and anchored by the island Caiama. The next day they came, after ten miles, to the mouth of the Caroli; when they were yet far distant they heard the great roar and fall of the river. So violent was the rush of the current that they were unable to make any headway up the stream—not a stone's cast in an hour. Accordingly, a halt was made, and messengers were sent inland to invite the native king to a parley. The king came, and Ralegh discoursed with him about the purpose of his coming and his Queen's goodness and beauty; and learned from him

about his people and country. By this time, all the rivers having risen five feet and more, further progress became impossible; and Ralegh, dividing his company into bands, sent them inland in every direction to explore. He himself went to the top of the first hills of the plain adjoining the river, and in the distance the celebrated falls of the Caroli were visible. "There appeared some ten or twelve overfalls in sight, every one as high over the other as a church tower, which fell with that fury that the rebound of waters made it seem as if it had all been covered over with a great shower of rain; and in some places we took it at the first for a smoke that had arisen over some great town. For my own part I was well persuaded from thence to have returned, being a very ill footman, but the rest were all so desirous to go near the strange thunder of waters, as they drew me on by little and little till we came into the next valley where we might better discern the same." The men of each band returned and brought with them stones and minerals, lustre, marquesite crystal, and stones that resembled sapphire.

Ralegh, as he looked at the stones and heard the reports of the wonderful fertility and resources of the land which lay in splendid expanse around him, must have felt within him that his dream of El Dorado was at last realized. Indeed, it seemed that he had only to come out and take possession.

But now "the fury of Oroonoco began daily to threaten us with dangers . . . for no half day passed but the river began to rage and overflow very fearfully and the rains came down in terrible showers, and gusts in great abundance, and withal our men began to cry out for want of shift, for no man had place to bestow any other apparel than that which he wore upon his back,

and that was thoroughly washed on his body for the most part ten times in one day; and we had now been well near a month, every day passing to the westward farther and farther from our ships. We therefore turned towards the east and spent the rest of the time in discovering the river towards the sea which we had not yet viewed and which was most material."

The first day of their return they sped down the stream of the great river against the wind one hundred miles, and anchored at the port of Morequito; and immediately a messenger was sent to bid the old king come. Once more Ralegh had a long conference with him concerning the kingdom of Guiana, and once more he was impressed by the wisdom of the old man's replies to his questions. Francis Sparrow and a boy, Harry Gordon, were left to learn the language till Ralegh came next year, equipped to conquer the land; and a young native was to go with them to England.

On their journey back to the sea they stayed several times to confer with native kings and find out how they were disposed towards the Spaniards and towards Tuga, the Emperor of Guiana. At the very end of their expedition they found the greatest peril awaiting them. "When we were arrived at the seaside, then grew our greatest doubt and the bitterest of all our journey forepassed, for I protest before God we were in a most desperate estate. . . . There arose a mighty storm, and the river's mouth was at least a league broad, so as we ran before night close under the land with our small boats and brought the galley as near as we could, but she had as much ado to live as could be, and there wanted little of her sinking and all those in her. . . . The longer we tarried the worse it was, and therefore I took Captain Gifford, Captain Calfield, and my cousin

Grenville into my barge, and after it cleared up about midnight we put ourselves to God's keeping and thrust out into the sea, leaving the galley at anchor, who durst not adventure out but by daylight. And so being all very sober and melancholy, one faintly cheering another to shew courage, it pleased God that the next day, about nine of the clock, we descried the island of Trinidado, and steering for the nearest part of it, we kept the shore until we came to Curiapan, where we found our ships an anchor, than which there was never to us a more joyful sight.

"Now it have pleased God to send us safe to our ships it is time to leave Guiana to the sun whom they worship, and steer away to the north."

So Ralegh and his brave men set their sails for England. Many hours in his cabin he must have enjoyed the luxury of rest, working out in his mind the time and proper equipment for the great expedition which he would lead back to the land which he had prospected. His imagination would picture to him the careful opponents who would be ready to put forward drawbacks and dangers; and he would answer them with such conviction that the most careful would gradually catch a part of his ardour. Guiana would be the topic of all Englishmen, and England's ultimate glory. He would view again the beauty of the land and its fertility, the broad plains and the thick woods, where birds of every brilliant colour flew, he would see the deer coming to drink at the water's edge, the refiner's basket, and the gold waiting to be worked out of the ground, and the precious stones waiting to be cut; the crystal, the sapphire, the lustre. He had his map, he had friends among the natives, he had made all ready for the great occupation. "The common soldier shall

here fight for gold, and pay himself, instead of pence, with plates of half-a-foot broad, whereas he breaketh his bones in other wars for provant and penury. Those commanders and chieftains that shoot at honour and abundance, shall find there more rich and beautiful cities, more temples adorned with golden images, more sepulchres filled with treasure than either Cortez found in Mexico, or Pizzaro in Peru, and the shining glory of this conquest will eclipse all those so far extended beams of the Spanish nation."

He arrived in England in August, 1595, having been absent not quite seven months. On all sides he met with opposition and disbelief. Some, the graver sort, considered it better to husband their forces, to repel the threatened invasion of Philip, who had sworn "to avenge the destruction of the Armada on Elizabeth, if he were reduced to pawn the last candlestick on his domestic altar." Others were angry that Ralegh had brought back no cargoes of gold and precious stones; others, again, laughed at him, saying that he had never been to Guiana at all, but had been lurking in Cornwall: that the whole thing was a cock and bull story to regain favour at Court. He, sneered they, was too easeful and sensual to endure the discomfort of so long a journey. Where were the riches which he would have taken, as Drake took, had he really been to Guiana? To which Ralegh answered proudly, "It became not the former fortune in which I once lived to go journies of picory: and it had sorted ill with the offices of honour, which, by her Majestie's grace I hold this day in England, to run from cape to cape, and from place to place, for the pillage of ordinary prizes."

His reception exasperated him; but he did not give way. In five months he fitted out another expedition

under Captain Keymis; and wrote a full account of the voyage he had himself taken. But this second expedition was too small to do anything else than keep in touch with the native friends, and to find fresh information.

Ralegh's efforts were unavailing. To found the empire in Guiana became his life's purpose, and he strove to attain it with all the resources of his energy. But the course of events was too strong for him, and he could not make men see far enough ahead of immediate gain. Many years later his scorn at their apathy broke out again, when, in writing his "History of the World," he is describing Roman energy in the founding of colonies: "Such an offer, were it made in England, concerning either Virginia or Guiana, it selfe would not overjoy the multitude. But the Commonalty of Rome tooke this in so good part, notwithstanding all danger, joined with the benefit, that Flaminius had ever after their good will." There is something indescribably pathetic in this personal touch—of the prisoner recording the fame of a man who had been honoured for offering less to his people than the prisoner himself had offered, and at less personal risk—Flaminius supported, Ralegh hindered—each by the nation which he most desired to serve.

Edmund Spenser felt for him a friend's sympathy when he wrote in the *Faërie Queene*—

> And shame on you, O Men, which boast your strong
> And valiant hearts, in thoughts lesse hard and bold,
> Yet quaile in conquest of that Land of Gold!
> But this to you, O Britons, most pertaines,
> To whom the right hereof itselfe hath sold,
> The whiche, for sparing little cost or paines,
> Loose so immortall glory, and so endless gaines.

CHAPTER XII

CADIZ AND FAYAL

Division of command—Ralegh's delay—Unwillingness of men to serve—Disputes—Ralegh's wise plan of action—The attack—The sack—Ralegh wounded—His small share of spoil—Return home—Sends ship to Guiana—Death of Lady Cecil—Robert Cecil's policy—Expedition to Azores—Fayal—Quarrel with Essex.

RALEGH did not long remain inactive. He found that a great adventure was in course of preparation in which he must needs take his part. A year before the Armada Sir John Hawkins had planned an attack on Spain's chief harbour, Cadiz, and in this year of 1596 Lord Howard of Effingham, High Admiral of England, determined to carry the plan into effect. The Earl of Essex was put in command of the land forces, Effingham of the fleet. Elizabeth invariably favoured the dangerous policy of divided command, which Ralegh in his "History of the World" cannot censure too strongly. The reason why such a clever woman continued to make this mistake is not known. Probably she feared that one man by a conspicuous victory would become too powerful for a subject. If this were the reason, and it seems likely that it was, her fears would naturally increase with her age. The same feeling, no doubt, prompted her strange choice of the inexperienced Essex. He, at any rate, she would think, would remain her loyal subject, and would not aspire to rebel against his royal mistress.

The preparations were on an extensive scale. The fleet was divided into four squadrons, which were led by Essex, by the Lord Admiral, by Ralegh, and by Lord Thomas Howard. The total muster numbered seventeen Queen's ships and seventy-six hired ships, which were chiefly used for transport, besides pinnaces and small craft. They were assisted by a Dutch squadron of twenty-four vessels. The men were nearly sixteen thousand in all, land-soldiers and mariners.

Essex was waiting with the fleet at Plymouth for Ralegh, who had been commissioned to find men for the expedition. Ralegh's delay was the cause of much anxiety, and naturally there were not wanting men ready to construe that delay into treachery. Gossip Bacon suggests that he was endeavouring to undermine the position of Essex and get himself nominated general of the land forces in his stead. The true reason of his delay is, however, available. On May 4 he writes from Northfleet on the Thames to Sir Robert Cecil, telling him of the difficulty he experienced in obtaining ships and men for the service. "Mr. Pope presst all the ships. Hee can also informe you how little her Majestie's autoretie is respected. For as fast as wee press men one day they come away another and say they will not serve." He recommends Mr. Pope to Sir Robert Cecil for his keenness, and proceeds, "Here are at Gravesend . . . sume 22 saile. Thos above that ar of great draught of water cannot tide it down, for they must take the high water and dare not make after an houre ebb untill they be past Barking Shelf. And now the wind is so strong as it is impossible to turne down, or to warpe down or to tooe downe. I cannot writ to our generalls all this tyme; for the pursevant found me in a countre villag, a mile from Gravend honting after runaway marriners and

dragging in the mire from ale-house to ale-house, and could gett no paper, butt that the pursevant had this peece."

The unwillingness to serve on a foreign expedition was common in England then: men began to weary of the hardships of fighting: they knew too intimately the horrors of a sea-battle. Essex, too, found the men at Plymouth ready to mutiny and desert. He immediately took stringent measures: soldiers were tried by martial law, and two were executed forthwith "on a very fair pleasant green called the Ho."

On June 1 the fleet at length put out to sea, and came to anchor on June 20 in the bay of St. Sebastians, which is half a league distant from Cadiz. The voyage had been taken without any mishap, except that the unwisdom of a divided command soon became apparent. From Dover Lord Howard of Effingham wrote to Robert Cecil: "My commission in being joined to the Earl is an idle thing; I am used but as a drag." But the weather was favourable, and several prizes were taken. From St. Sebastians Ralegh had instructions to sail with the ships under his charge and the Dutch squadron to the Main, and to lie just outside the harbour; he was bidden to take special care that the ships riding near Cadiz did not escape, but not to fight, except in self-defence, without further direction. "When I was arrived back again (which was two hours after the rest) I found the Earl of Essex disembarking his soldiers; and he had put many companies into boats, purposing to make his descent on the west side of Cales; but such was the greatness of the billow, by reason of a forcible southerly wind, as the boats were ready to sink at the stern of the Earl; and indeed divers did so, and in them some of the armed men; but because it was formerly resolved (and

that to cast doubts would have been esteemed an effect of fear) the Earl purposed to go on until such time as I came aboard him, and in the presence of all the collonels protested against the resolution; giving him reasons and making apparent demonstrations that he thereby ran the way of our general ruin, to the utter overthrow of the whole armies, their own lives, and her Majesty's future safety. The Earl excused himself, and laid it before the Lord Admiral, who (he said) 'would not consent to enter with the fleet till the town were first possessed.' All the commanders and gentlemen present besought me to dissuade the attempt, for they all perceived the danger, and were resolved that the most part could not but perish in the sea, ere they came to set foot on ground, and if any arrived on shoar, yet were they sure to have their boats cast on their heads; and that twenty men in so desperate a descent would have defeated them all. The Earl hereupon prayed me to perswade my Lord Admiral, who, finding a certain destruction by the former resolution, was content to enter the port.

"When I brought news of this agreement to the Earl, calling out of my boat Entramus, he cast his hat into the sea for joy and prepared to weigh anchor."

In these words Ralegh tells how he saved England from a great disaster. It is not known to whom he wrote this account, but it was found and printed by his grandson, Philip Ralegh, just one hundred and three years later. Probably Lord Howard took a negative attitude; he found, no doubt, a grim satisfaction in seeing the impetuous young fool, Essex, send the land force which he commanded to its inevitable destruction. He would think that he could easily set matters right again with his fleet, and Essex would be once for all humiliated, if not slain. Ralegh saved the situation. He

had the moral courage to disdain the charge of cowardice, and the ability to prove in words the complete wrongness of the plan of attack. That was not all. The situation was still perilous to a degree. The day was drawing to a close; boats were filled in disorder with men from different ships. They were an attacking force with whom time was of the utmost value, and they were without a plan of attack. Ralegh was indefatigable. All his powers were called into play—his influence over men, his capacity of managing affairs, his knowledge of tactics in sea-fighting and land-fighting—and he mastered the crisis.

The men were disposed to their ships, and the ships were anchored at the very mouth of the harbour, and probably Ralegh was at the pains to prove to them that this retirement was no disgrace. Order was not restored until ten o'clock at night, and then Ralegh drew up a full account of the manner in which the attack should be conducted, full in every detail of the arrangement of the ships and the precedence of the commanders. His plan was accepted, and at his own request he was allowed the post of honour, much coveted, as leader of the van. Lord Thomas Howard especially coveted the foremost position; "he pressed the Generals to have the service committed unto him, and left the *Meer Honour* to Mr. Dudley, putting himself in the *Nonpareill.* For mine own part, as I was willing to give honour to my Lord Thomas, having both precedency in the army, and being a nobleman whom I much honoured, so yet I was resolved to give and not take example for this service; holding mine own reputation dearest, and remembering my great duty to her Majesty. With the first peep of day, therefore, I weighed anchor, and bare with the Spanish fleet, taking the start of all ours a good distance."

Within the harbour the enemy were waiting in readiness and in force. Great galleons and galleys, manned with oarsmen, were drawn up in front of the forts, which opened fire upon Ralegh's ships; the men in the galleys gripped their oars in readiness to row out and board any ship which the cannon from the forts or the galleons might disable. Ralegh sailed right into the harbour, disdaining to answer the fire from the forts and the curtain with anything but a contemptuous blare from a trumpet, and leaving the ships that followed him to scatter with their fire the galleys. Ralegh sailed right into the harbour; "the *St. Philip*, the great and famous Admiral of Spain, was the mark I shot at, esteeming these galleys but as wasps in respect of the powerfulness of the other; and being resolved to be revenged for the *Revenge*, or to second her with mine own life." For on the *Revenge* had perished his gallant friend and kinsman, Sir Richard Grenville; and many times through that day Grenville's dying words must have thrilled his mind, those words that are the most illustrious requiem of a dying soldier, spoken in the Spanish of his conquerors, "Here die I, Richard Grenville, with a joyful and quiet mind, having ended my life like a true soldier that has fought for his country, his Queen, his religion, and his honour." For three hours Ralegh, at anchor, kept up an incessant cannonade against the galleons and the forts; the volleys of cannon and culverin came as thick as if it had been a skirmish of musketeers. On one side lay Lord Thomas Howard's ship, the *Lyon*; on the other lay the *Mary Rose* and the *Dreadnaught*. When Essex heard the tremendous roar of the cannon he could no longer stop outside the harbour, but sailed in the *Swiftsure* as far to the van as he was able, regardless of battle order. But "always I must without glory say for myself

that I held single in the head of all." At last the cannonade became too heavy. Ralegh had been told not to board until fly-boats came from the fleet; and no fly-boats came. Accordingly, in a little skiff, he was rowed to the *Swiftsure* and besought Essex to let him board with his own ship—"for it was the same loss to burn or sink, for I must endure the one." He convinced Essex, who promised upon his honour to second him in whatsoever he did. Ralegh had been away from his ship for a quarter of an hour; but during that quarter of an hour Sir Francis Vere, the Marshal, and Lord Thomas Howard had pushed their ships quietly in front of the *Warspite*. This Ralegh could not brook. "At my return, finding myself from being the first to be but the third, I presently let slip anchor, and thrust in between my Lord Thomas and the Marshal, and went up further ahead than all them before and thrust myself athwart the channel, so as I was sure none should outstart me again, for that day." But though the battle continued to rage furiously and at close quarters, Sir Francis Vere and Lord Thomas Howard could not rest content with second places. Sir Francis Vere secretly caused a rope to be fastened to the *Warspite* that he might draw his ship ahead of her. But sailors told Ralegh of this, and he ordered the rope to be severed.

Then Ralegh started to board. He laid out a warp by the side of the *Philip* "to shake hands with her," and the other English ships followed suit. Fear seized the Spaniards. "They all let slip, and ran aground, tumbling into the sea heaps of souldiers, so thick as if coals had been powred out of a sack in many ports at once: some drowned and some sticking in the mud. . . . The spectacle was very lamentable on their side; for

many drowned themselves; many, half-burnt, leapt into the water; very many hanging by the ropes' ends by the ship's side under the water even to the lips; many swimming with grievous wounds, strucken under water and put out of their pain: and so huge a fire, and such tearing of the ordnance in the great *Philip* and the rest, when the fire came to them, as, if any man had a desire to see Hell itself, it was there most lively figured."

Then followed the capture and sack of Cadiz. In the assault Ralegh received "a grievous blow in the leg interlaced and deformed with splinters." But he was carried on shore on men's shoulders until a horse was forthcoming, when he mounted. For an hour he remained in the town, but then the pain of the wound became intolerable; the streets were filled with jostling tumultuous soldiers, and they pressed against his leg in their disorder, do what he would to prevent them. So he returned to his ship to rest, while the sack raged in the town.

The plunder taken was immense in quantity and value: and as was invariably the case, there was much ill-feeling as to its distribution. The Queen quarrelled with the generals, thinking that they had much held back, and the generals with each other, thinking that the share of each was disproportionate. Ralegh especially fared ill. "For my own part I have gotten a lame leg and a deformed. For the rest either I spake too late, or it was otherwise resolved. I have not wanted good words, and exceeding kind and regardful usance. But I have possession of naught but poverty and pain." Ralegh was better able to win a first place in the fighting-line, than in the prize list. This he resented with absolute candour: but to deduce from his

resentment that he cared only for gain is totally to misunderstand the nature of the man.

The results of the victory, for which Ralegh was chiefly responsible, were far-reaching and decisive. It crippled Spain's power more effectually even than the Armada. Cadiz was razed to the ground; as the Council of State decided that to raze the town was safer than to garrison it for English purposes.

Ralegh gained the respect of his fellow soldiers for his genius and his bravery; even men who, like Sir Anthony Standen, were hostile to him, wrote in enthusiastic praise of his conduct. "Sir Walter Ralegh did (in my judgment) no man better: and his artillery most effect. I never knew the gentleman till this time, and I am sorry for it, for there are in him excellent things, beside his valour. And the observation he hath in this voyage used with my Lord of Essex hath made me love him." But at the Court little had changed. Essex remained arrogant and hostile, and for the time his influence appears to have been dominant.

Immediately on his return Ralegh busied himself in the preparation and despatch of another ship to Guiana, to keep in touch with the natives whose alliance he had on his own visit obtained. Mr. Thomas Masham sailed in a pinnace called the *Wat* on the 14th of October from Limehouse upon the Thames. Ralegh never ceased from ardour in this great enterprise of his; nothing drove it from his mind; he was convinced of its ultimate success, believing in it as he believed in himself. But he could not go in person, the time was not yet ripe. So he with his wounded leg was glad to retire to Sherborne for a season to the quiet of his Dorsetshire garden. In Sherborne was brought him the news of the death of Lady Cecil, to whom Sir Robert was much

devoted, and Ralegh's letter of sympathy is beautiful in thought and expression, though, such is the interesting divergency of human opinion, there are those who think the letter crude, sententious and laboured.

"SIR,

"Because I know not how you dispose of your sealf, I forbeare to visitt you, preferringe your plesinge before myne owne desire. I had rather be with you now then att any other tyme, if I could thereby ether take off frome you the burden of your sorrows, or lay the greater part thereof on myne owne hart. . . . There is no man sorry for death it sealf, butt only for the tyme of death; every one knowing that it is a bonnd never forfeted to God. . . . If then we know the same to be certayne and inevitable, wee ought withall to take the tyme of his arrivall in as good part as the knowledge; and not to lament att the instant of every seeminge adversity, which we ar asured have byn on ther way towards us from the begininge. . . . I beleve it that sorrows are dangerus companions, converting badd into yevill and yevill into worse, and do no other service then multeply harms. They ar the treasures of weak harts and of the foolishe. The minde that entertayneth them is as the yearth and dust whereon sorrows and adversetes of the world do as the beasts of the field, tread trample and defile. The minde of man is that part of God which is in us, which, by how mich it is subject to passion, by so mich it is farther from Hyme that gave it us. Sorrows draw not the dead to life, butt the livinge to deathe. . . ."

So Ralegh wrote; he was acquainted with grief, and familiar with death in every horrid guise. Twenty years later he was to prove with his own example the truth of what he wrote: "It apartayneth to every man of a wize and worthy spiritt to draw together into sufferance the unknown future to the known present; lookinge no

less with the eyes of the minde then thos of the body—the one beholdinge afar off and the other att hand—that thos things of this worlde in which we live be not strange unto us when they approach. . . ."

But Sir Robert Cecil was playing a deep and subtle game which was to make him the chief man in England during the few years that remained to the Queen of life and after her death. Essex and Ralegh he feared. He encouraged Essex to pass on his proud way to disaster, using Essex to thwart the rise of Ralegh. And Essex needed small encouragement. He coveted the popularity, which was to end in his utter undoing. Meanwhile his star was in the ascendant. His pride had not yet outgrown his strength.

Outwardly Cecil was friendly to Ralegh and hostile to Essex. He hated Essex; the two men's *natures* were in fierce opposition.

Ralegh was still suspended from his post of Captain of the Guard; but in June he was brought by Cecil to the Queen's presence. The Queen received him graciously, and reinstated him. Moreover, Ralegh and Essex were no longer in open enmity. Mr. Rowland Whyte records that "Sir Walter Ralegh hath been very often very private with the Earl of Essex and is the mediator of a peace between him and Sir Robert Cecil." And again in a letter dated April 9: "This day being Monday Sir Robert Cecil went in coach with the Earl of Essex to his house where Sir Walter Ralegh came, and they dined there together. After dinner they were very private all three for two hours, where the treaty of peace was confirmed." Between Ralegh and Essex there was something in common at certain moments; there was a gallantry about both men, which, in spite of everything, each could not fail to recognize in the other. This

Sir A. Gorges noticed; he wrote with much acumen: "Though the Earl had many doubts and jealousies buzzed into his ears against Sir Walter Ralegh, yet I have often observed that both in his greatest actions of service, and in the times of his chiefest recreations, he would ever accept of his counsel and company before many others who thought themselves more in his favour."

Ralegh's rest was brief. Almost immediately after despatching the *Wat* to Guiana, he was engaged in raising levies and supplies with Essex for a new expedition against Spain. For the Spanish king was resolved to revenge his bad defeat at Cadiz by another invasion of England. Ralegh always believed that the surest manner of defence against such an invasion was an immediate attack. And that was the step which the Lords of the Council determined to take. About the time that Ralegh's ship, the *Wat*, returned from Guiana with the news which its captain, Mr. Thomas Masham, brought, the expedition was ready to put out to sea. The fleet was divided into three squadrons; the first was commanded by the Earl of Essex, who was Admiral and General-in-Chief; the second by Lord Thomas Howard; the third by Sir Walter Ralegh, whose position was that of Rear-Admiral, and in whose squadron sailed the great galleons, the *St. Andrew* and the *St. Matthew*, which he had captured at Cadiz. On Sunday the 10th of July the fleet set sail. Their destination was Ferroll in the Azores, where the Spanish fleet was reported to be harbouring. Their instructions were firstly to attack the fleet, and if it had gone away, to follow in pursuit; secondly, to intercept and capture the homeward-bound fleets from the East and West Indies. The expedition has passed into history under the name of the Islands Voyage.

The very day after the fleet weighed anchor a storm beat upon the ships with such violence that they were eventually forced to return to whatsoever harbour each could make. Many came very near to sinking, so high was the wind, so strong the waves, and there were sailors who died of exhaustion on their return to shore. The damage done to the heavy ships was very great, and time was necessary to refit them for the sea; the delay involved the necessity of revictualling the ships. On the 26th of July Ralegh reported from Plymouth, "Wee only attend the winde, having repayred as much as we can our bruses. Butt we shall not bee in any great corage for winter weather and longe nights, in thes ships."

The weather was unpropitious on their second venture, though they were obliged to wait until the second week in August. Ralegh's squadron was separated from the fleet, and was forced by the wind into the Bay of Biscay, out of which he found the greatest difficulty in making his way. Later in the voyage Sydney's flyboat foundered; but he and all his soldiers were rescued. "I have notwithstanding," writes Ralegh, "followed my Lord's order to cum to the Ilands, and I am now this 8 of September, in sight of Tercera, having chosen rather to perishe than to relinquishe the enterprize; and, the Lord douth know, in a torne shipp. Butt her Majestye shall find that I valew not my life; although I hope that her Majestye would not that I perishe in vayne. I hope after too dayes to fynde my Lorde Generall and the fleet with whom, I thinke, all the rest of her Majesties shipps ar, butt the *Mathew* with poore Georg Carew. It is a carfull and perelus tyme of the yeare for thes wayghty shipps. The Lorde of Heaven send us all well to returne, and send us the good hope to do her Majestie acceptable service; to performe which wee have already suffered

miche. For my particular, I have never dared to rest since my wreacks, and God doth judge that I never for thes 10 dayes came so mich as in to bedd or cabbin."

Ralegh's squadron did not join the fleet until Essex had been ten days at Flores. Then it was determined to make a joint attack upon Fayal, as they had heard that it was unlikely the Spanish ships from the Indies would sail at all that year, and if they did sail, that they would avoid Flores. Essex sailed first for Fayal, because Ralegh's squadron was obliged to delay for repairs and revictualling. But Ralegh's squadron arrived first at Fayal, and, having waited three days for Essex, Ralegh at length, on the fourth day, attacked and captured Fayal by himself. He writes in the "History of the World:" "There were indeede some which were in that voyage who advised me not to undertake it: and I harkened unto them, somewhat longer than was requisite, especially whilest they desired me to reserve the title of such an exploit (though it were not great) for a greater person. But when they began to tell me of difficulty: I gave them to understand, the same which I now maintaine, that it was more difficult to defend a coast then to invade it. The truth is, that I could have landed my men with more ease than I did; yea without finding any resistance if I would have rowed to another place, yea even there where I landed if I would have taken more company to helpe me. But, without fearing any imputation of rashnesse, I may say that I had more regard of reputation in that businesse, than of safetie. For I thought it to belong unto the honour of our Prince and Nation, that a few Ilanders should not thinke any advantage great enough, against a fleet set forth by Q. Elizabeth: and further I was unwilling that some Low Countrie Captaines and others, not of mine own squadron, whose

assistance I had refused, should please themselves with a sweet conceit . . . that for want of their helpe I was driven to turne taile."

The passage is one of interest, larger than the mere description of an engagement. It shows Ralegh's immense and correct confidence in his judgment; and how his outlook always embraced much more than the actual event in hand, though its outline was never blurred for that reason. The theory he pronounced on the deck of his ship, and proved next day in the engagement, he reiterates in his History in one of the most notable of his digressions, that an island's only safe defence is her fleet. He ends his remarks with the very typical sentence, "I hope that this question shall never come to triall; his Majesties many moveable Forts will forbid the experience. And thoughe the Englishe will no lesse disdaine, than any Nation under heaven can doe, to be beaten upon their owne ground or elsewhere by a forraigne enemy; yet to entertaine those that shall assaile us with their own beefe in their bellies, and before they eate of oure Kentish capons, I take it to be the wisest way. To doe whiche, his Majesty, after God, will imploy his good ships on the Sea and not trust to any intrenchment upon the shore."

But to the actual action. The men who foretold trouble from the greater man spoke as truly as Ralegh proved his courage and foresight in the event. The fort on the shore was quickly taken; but behind rose a high hill, topped by another strong fort, and the men at the sight wavered to withdraw. None were willing to reconnoitre. Ralegh was furious, and swore that he would do scout's work himself. Sir Arthur Gorges and some dozen personal followers would not suffer him to go alone. So they made their way together up the hill

under continual fire from the enemy. Ralegh's clothes were torn by bullets. Gorges was shot in the leg. The ascent impressed the enemy. When the final attack was made, the fort was found to be deserted.

When Essex arrived, Ralegh was master of the island. Ralegh's enemies (a great man seldom lacks such enemies) had long been trying to enflame the antagonism between him and Essex, and now they insisted to Essex that Ralegh's success was flat disobedience, and warranted a heavy penalty. A court martial should be called, and should punish him with death. So when Ralegh visited the Earl's vessel to give an official account of the victory, he was surprised to meet with angry looks and the charge of a breach of the orders. But he convinced Essex that he was within his rights. "None should land any of the troops without the General's presence or his order," said Essex. "There is an Article," replied Ralegh, "that no captain of any ship or company, if he be severed from the fleet shall land anywhere without directions from the General or some principal commander upon pain of death. But I take upon myself to be a principal commander under your Lordship, and therefore not subject to that Article." And he proceeded to explain how the delay of Essex made him think that he was adventuring upon some other enterprise, and how his own company began to murmur and hint at fear. Essex was not easily convinced. Weakness dreads to be slighted, where strength relies upon its own authority. Monson observes in his narrative of the Island Voyage, "The act was urged with that vehemency by those that hated Sir Walter that if my Lord, who by nature was timorous and flexible had not feared how it would be taken in England, I think Sir Walter had smarted for it."

The incident illustrates Ralegh's address, a quality which was essential at that time for any success in life; that was the time when man dealt immediately with man. The mind must always be alive and on the alert. Here was Ralegh, coming to report a successful and daring exploit, suddenly obliged to defend himself against a trumped-up charge. If he failed to take in the whole situation in a moment, and to stand his own ground, death would result from the failure. Nor could he simply rely upon justice; he must know the man with whom he was dealing, and the men who were poisoning the General's mind. Ralegh's self-control is as amazing as his address. He had need of both.

The General was an arrogant, spoiled youth, angry at the knowledge that his subordinate was a better man, angry at his renewed success. A rash word on Ralegh's part would have been his last. And Ralegh had much cause to hate the young man. They were rivals for the love of a magnificent woman whom they served; their rivalry would accentuate the elder man's dislike of the younger's youth. But there is a dignity about Ralegh's conduct and defence which shows no cringing before the reigning favourite, but a superiority to all pettiness, a kind of freedom from what may quickly become the fetters of personality.

Such was Ralegh's last great enterprise against Spanish power. Hereafter the policy of England was to undergo a change, and in the new scheme of things a man like Ralegh could find no place. He was too great to be used by a small mind; pettiness is always full of fear and distrust and envy of powers which are not within its little scope of understanding.

CHAPTER XIII

THE UNDERMINING

Robert Cecil in power—Downfall of Essex—Ralegh's opinion of Essex—Governor of Jersey—Peril imminent.

WITH the fall of Fayal the naval war with Spain came to an end, for Philip II. died in the early autumn of the following year, 1598, which was the year of the great Lord Treasurer Burghley's death. His son, Sir Robert Cecil, became the chief man in England.

Time and experience did not soften the arrogance of Essex. On his return he set himself more than ever to the task of becoming supreme in the kingdom. Always there has been a certain rivalry between the statesman who manages affairs at home, and the successful soldier. Each is inclined to underrate the value of the other's service. Essex naturally thought the highest place in the government should be occupied by a dashing soldier like himself. He had whatever prestige popularity gives, and he had influence with the Queen, but not so much as he thought. Robert Cecil knew his man, and quietly determined his downfall. Through his mediation Lord Howard of Effingham was raised to the earldom of Nottingham, which, combined with his position of Lord High Admiral, gave him precedence of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex. This Essex, in his arrogance, could not tolerate. He absented himself from Court, and all Howard's efforts to pacify his anger were futile. But

the Queen began to weary at his absence. She asked Ralegh to try and make Howard waive his right of precedence, but this Howard refused to do. Accordingly, again at Ralegh's suggestion, who valued the Queen's happiness more highly than his personal likes and dislikes, Essex was created Earl Marshal of England, and Howard retired in his turn from Court.

On the return of Essex, Cecil began to play a game at which he was an adept. He wanted Essex to feel that his importance was properly recognized without admitting him into any State matters. So he arranged long conferences with Essex, and with Ralegh, about projects which he never had the least intention of bringing to any issue; and these conferences about nothing were carefully attended by all the pomp of formality. Essex would thereby be flattered, would grow in pride to his own undoing, and would be likely to reveal the trend of his own scheme. Essex, in spite of his almost childish arrogance, was a man to be reckoned with. He had many friends of importance, the most distinguished of whom was Francis Bacon. By means of his own spies he kept in touch with foreign affairs that he might criticize the Queen's advisers; he became friendly with King James of Scotland; he could rely on the help of every one who was disappointed of office or reward by Burghley or his son.

But he was no match for the astute Sir Robert Cecil. And the very year of Burghley's death, at one of the heated Council meetings, Essex had weakened by his uncontrolled conduct his influence with the Queen. The Queen had interfered on Burghley's behalf against Essex; and Essex in a rage "turned his back on the Queen with a gesture of contempt, muttering an unpardonable insult," as Mr. Sidney Lee has it.

He was not a safe person to leave idle. The office of Lord Deputy of Ireland was vacant; it was offered him, and after some dissent on his part was accepted. His ruin was now imminent. He felt his power grow less; and on Ralegh in particular he looked with hatred as upon the chief cause of his downfall. And small wonder if Ralegh hated the man who had offered gross insult to the old Queen in public. "Why do I talk of victory or success?" writes Essex from Ireland to the Queen. "Is it not known that from England I receive nothing but discomforts and soul's wounds. . . . Is it not lamented both there and here that a Cobham and Ralegh . . . should have such credit and favour with your Majesty . . ." But without Ralegh, who, as his subordinate, had won him fame at Cadiz and at Fayal, and warded off disaster, the enterprise of Essex in Ireland was a failure. He wasted time and money, and achieved nothing. Then Essex resolved upon an impetuous step characteristic of him. He determined to return home, and to drive away by force the men who were keeping him from his proper place of supremacy; he even enlisted the support of James of Scotland, who was favourable to his scheme, but temporized, saying that he would send messengers to the Queen to beg her to restore Essex to her favour. What Essex needed for his mad project, however, was an army, not messages. Essex returned from Ireland, but Cecil was perfectly ready for him, and the people of London did not rise at his protest against the Queen's ministers; they gaped and wondered, as they would gape and wonder at a madman. Essex was arrested, was impeached for high treason, and beheaded.

The impetuousness of Essex approached very near to madness, and a dangerous form of madness. If any one

has ever deserved death for treason, Essex deserved it. Ralegh wrote his opinion quite frankly to Sir Robert about him. The letter has raised much feeling against Ralegh. But he had good reason to know the peril a nature like that of Essex could bring to a nation or to anything with which he was connected, and he was perfectly just and honest in the opinion he gave that Essex's wings should be clipped. The letter runs as follows :—

"SIR,

"I am not wize enough to geve yow advise ; but if you take it for a good councell to relent towards this tirant, yow will repent it when it shalbe too late. His mallice is fixt, and will not evaporate by any your mild courses. For he will ascribe the alteration to her Majesties pusillanimitye and not to your good nature ; knowing that yow worke but uppon her humor and not out of any love towards hyme. The less yow make hyme, the less he shalbe able to harme yow and your's. And if her Majesties favor faile hyme, hee will agayne decline to a common parson. For after-revenges, feare them not ; for your own father that was estemed to be the contriver of Norfolk's ruin, yet his son followeth your father's son and loveth him. Humours of men succeed not ; butt grow by occasions and accidents of tyme and poure . . . I could name you a thowsand of thos ; and therefore after fears are but profesies—or rather conjectures—from causes remote. Looke to the present, and yow do wisely. His sonne shalbe the youngest Earle of Ingland butt on, and, if his father be now keipt down Will Cecill shalbe abell to keip as many men att his heeles as hee, and more too. Hee may also mache in a better howse then his ; and so that feare is not worth the fearinge. Butt if the father continew, he wilbe able to break the branches and pull up the tree ; root and all. Lose not your advantage ; if you do, I rede your destiney.

"Let the Q. hold Bothwell while she hath hyme. Hee will ever be the canker of her estate and sauftye. Princes are lost by securetye; and preserved by prevention. I have seen the last of her good dayes, and all ours, after his libertye."

It is strange and it is memorable how the sentiment of the last sentence but one, "Princes are lost by securetye," ran through the minds of men at this time: again and again it occurs. The witches in Macbeth chant—

> "Security
> Is mortals' chiefest enemy."

Spenser writes—

> "Little wist he his fatall future woe
> But was secure: the liker he to fall."

It is more than the turn of phrase (though great expressions were common enough then—as for example, "millions of mischief" which Ralegh uses in a letter and which arrests you in Julius Cæsar—

> "Men that smile have in their hearts I fear
> Millions of mischiefs.")

It is the trend of thought. It illustrates a feature of Elizabethan life that was common to every rank, but most common in the highest. Men were tremendously vital, but life was not valued for its own sake: life was not looked upon as sacred; rather life was regarded as a possession to hold which it was worth while fighting to the death.

During the rebellion—the word can hardly be applied to such a ridiculous outburst—Ralegh sent for Sir Ferdinando Gorges at Durham House. He wanted to warn Gorges, who had served under him, that his arrest had been ordered. Gorges feared treachery, that

their conversation might be overheard or that he might be suddenly seized, and consulting Essex, with whom he was staying, at length decided to meet Ralegh in the one safe place—namely, on the river. They rowed out into mid-stream, met, and conferred. In mid-stream their words were safe; their bodies were not. Sir Christopher Blount, who was a partisan of Essex, heard of the prospective meeting, and urged Gorges to kill Ralegh and thus to rid the Earl of his chief enemy at a blow. Gorges was a man of honour and refused. But Blount was strongly in favour of Ralegh's death. As Ralegh was pulled to the place of conference, Blount fired with a musket at him four times. Essex, Gorges, Blount, and other brave men were beheaded, and Ralegh, as Captain of the Guard, was present at their executions. On the scaffold Blount asked, "Is Sir Walter Ralegh here?" Ralegh came forward. "Sir Walter Ralegh," said Blount, "I thank God that you are present. I had an infinite desire to speak with you, to ask your forgiveness ere I died. Both for the wrong done you and for my particular ill-intent towards you, I beseech you forgive me."

"I most willingly," Ralegh replied, "and I beseech God to forgive you, and to give you His divine comfort." He turned to those standing round: "I protest before God that whatever Sir Christopher Blount meant towards me, I, for my part, never bore him any ill-intent."

After the death of Essex, the boy who had recklessly thrown himself against the astute Cecil to gain political power, men watched the demeanour of Ralegh closely; he too was the favourite of his Queen; they watched him and saw that sadness brooded on his face. There were many things to create sadness.

The great Queen was growing old, and in her age had been forced to sign the death-warrant of the young man who was dear to her and who had presumed on her affection. The old Lord Treasurer was dead; Burghley, whom the Queen tended with her own hand in his last illness, knowing the worth of the man who had served his country well for forty years; his son, the astute Cecil, had taken his place; but Robert Cecil played his own game: he was too astute. He desired advantage for his country, but that advantage must come through himself.

The great days were passing. Ralegh had seen the Queen ruling the nation as only a woman and a woman of genius and of beauty could rule it; he saw her when the power of her womanhood was declining and its weakness was in evidence. Who could take her place? What man or what woman? And must not the place itself be changed and its absolute authority be modified? Time was converting the Queen into her country's encumbrance. And who would succeed his Queen Elizabeth? Where were the men to carry on the great traditions of Elizabeth? Robert Cecil was too astute. . . .

* * * * *

Meanwhile Ralegh continued the duties of his own life, at Sherborne and at Durham House. Lord Cobham's name is often found at this time in association with Ralegh. Cobham was Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and often on his way to the coast he managed to make a short visit to the Raleghs at Sherborne. He was a weak man, as the event proved. And Ralegh liked him; a strong man is often led into liking a weak man, whom he is able to render pliant to his will.

About this time, too, Ralegh was made Governor of

Jersey, and immediately he set about his new duties, which were many and various, with his own energy. There is an interesting letter from Lady Ralegh to Cecil; it tells not only of her husband's first journey to Jersey but also of a fire at Durham House, and in the telling shows something of Lady Ralegh's character.

"SUR,

"Hit tis trew that your packet brought me the newes of the mischans of feeiar at Durram Houes, wher, I thanke God hit went noo fardar. Other wies, hit had rid ous of all our poour substans of plat and other thinges. Unly now the loos is of your cumpani and my Lord Cobham's wich I thinke by this menes wee cannot injoy this winter. . . .

"I ded heer from Sur Walter within too dayes after he landed at Jarsi: wher he was safly landed and rioly intertained with joye. But he was too dayes and too nites on the sea, with contrari windes, not withstanding hee went from Wamouthe in so fayer a wind and weether, as littell Wat and myselfe brought him abord the shipt. Hee writeth to me hee never saw a plesanttar iland; but protesteth unfannedly hit tis not, in valew, the veri third part that was reported, or inded hee beliffed. My cossin Will is heer, very will and louketh will and fat with his batheinge. This, wishing you all honnar and the full contentements of your hart, I ever rest

"Your asured poour frind

"E. RALEGH

"I am glad this mischans of feeiar cam not by ani neckelegans of ani sarvant of mine, but by me cossin Darci's sarvant,—a woman that delleth just under our logging, and anoyeth ous infenitly. I hope hee will now remoueve heer. I humbelly besuch you let this lettar heer inclosed be sent."

The little Will Cecil, who was well, and looked well and fat from his bathing, grew up into the second Earl

of Salisbury. We can only hope that Darcy's servant, who was evidently a constant thorn in the flesh of the orderly Lady Ralegh, was removed; no positive facts are known.

The letter discovers a side of Ralegh's life about which little has been written, but which is none the less interesting and valuable. Little Wat and little Will were bathing and getting fat by the sea-side, while Essex was under sentence of death, while the great Queen was growing old, and while huge disorders were pending in the kingdom on the event of the Queen's death. Little things and big are jostled strangely together in the course of a man's life.

Meanwhile Ralegh's new duties as Governor of Jersey were occupying his attention. Always he entered a position untrammelled by what had been done there before his coming, and determined to do the best possible. It was so in his Governorship of Jersey. His changes were entirely for the good. He found a compulsory system of defence which pressed heavily on the inhabitants in what was called the Corps-de-Garde. He did away with the Corps-de-Garde. While he pondered on the great issues which were pending in England, he settled the small disputes of the islanders under his rule; for he was supreme judge in civil and Crown causes. He was at the pains to see to the proper fortification of the island, and to all the many businesses that his office entailed.

During these years he travelled often backwards and forwards between Durham House and Sherborne and the island of Jersey. He found on one occasion that by some curious oversight the Duc de Biron, who had come on an embassy from Henry of France, was at Crosby Hall, with not one nobleman or gentleman to

accompany or guide him. "I never saw so great a person neglected," he writes to Sir Robert Cecil. "Wee have caried them to Westminster to see the monuments; and this Monnday we entertayned them at the Bear Garden, which they had great pleasure to see. . . . I sent to and fro and have labored like a moyle to fashion things so as on Wensday night they wilbe att Bagshoot and Thursday at the Vine." The Queen was at this time staying with the Marquis of Winchester at Basing, and to her the Duc de Biron rode, escorted by Ralegh. From Basing Ralegh wrote to Lord Cobham telling him of the Queen's wish for his attendance. He says that the French were only stopping three days, and were all wearing black. "So as I have only made mee a black taffeta sute to be in; and leave all my other sutes:" and he adds to the letter a postscript, which shows how punctilious he was in matters of dress: "I am yeven now going att night to London to provide me a playne taffeta sute and a playne black saddell, and wil be here agayne by Twesday night." He wrote late on Saturday night.

Little resulted from the Duc de Biron's embassy. But he had the audacity to question Elizabeth about the fate of Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, and to express sympathy for him. Sully, the famous memoirist, reports their conversation, and points out the singular resemblance between the characters of Essex and of the Duc de Biron, and between the end each met. The Duc de Biron was beheaded ten months later for treason. This is the irony of things. Sully credits Elizabeth with the insight of knowing how like Biron was to Robert Devereux, that she almost augured his downfall, and warned him against his rash courses. The parallel between the two men is remarkable.

So Ralegh went about his various business as Governor of Jersey, as Captain of the Guard, transacted, too, the affairs of his own estates in Munster, Sherborne, and Durham House, while he and every man of influence in England kept pondering on the great question, vital to the welfare of the country, vital to the welfare of each man, who should succeed to the Queen Elizabeth? And Elizabeth was growing old.

CHAPTER XIV

SUCCESSION PLOTS

Possible successors to Elizabeth—Lord Henry Howard—Spies—Ralegh's position—The net is drawn round him—Letter of Cecil—Last illness and death of Elizabeth—Carey's ride to the North.

THE position was one of acute interest. For Elizabeth had maintained her father's tradition that the sovereign reigned by divine right, and by her genius made the tradition credible. The responsibility of vesting any man or any woman with such power was immense. The choice might bring disaster to the nation, and it might bring disaster upon the men who opposed the final choice, even upon the men who supported it. And Elizabeth would not tolerate a mention even of her death, still less would she help to appoint a successor. Peter Wentworth had proposed to the House of Lords that a joint petition should be addressed to her, requesting her humbly to consider the question. Peter Wentworth was forthwith sent to the Tower, where he died after three years' imprisonment. All the hints of her higher ministers she treated with disdain. That she, Elizabeth, must die, it was impossible! But death was slowly approaching.

Sir Robert Cecil watched the approach of death, and made his secret preparations; for the greatest disaster of all would be that death should find the country unprepared. Mystery, carefully planned against the

unravelling of chance or surprise, shrouds all the correspondence of the time. No one can properly tell what letters are authentic, what are written purposely to be discovered and to deceive. It was dangerous for any man to trust any man with his solution to the great problem. But Cecil was the political leader; in the Council he was informed of the undercurrents of opinion at home and abroad. He kept his hold upon that most important item—news, so difficult to acquire, so hard to test, that that alone made his position strong; and he determined that King James VI. of Scotland must succeed to the Crown. The accession of James would ensure his own prosperity, and James, being manageable, would ensure the prosperity of the country, for Cecil himself would continue to govern. He secretly corresponded with James; he explained his authority, and asserted his zeal on James's behalf.

Arabella Stuart and William Seymour, both of royal blood, were married in 1603, and their claim to the throne was strong and supported by those who desired the reintroduction of the Catholic religion. At one time Philip of Spain was anxious that the Infanta should become Queen of England. He thought that the Catholic party in England would welcome her. But he had neither the money nor the power to enforce such a claim, and the project was abandoned in favour of Arabella Stuart and William Seymour, as James VI. of Scotland, though his mother was a Catholic and he kept hinting that he was himself open to conversion, could not be trusted. Cecil, however, succeeded in proving to James that only through his own agency could he hope to wear the crown of England. Cecil's chief helper in this was Lord Henry Howard. They corresponded at length with James. Lord Henry

Howard was an absolutely unscrupulous man, and he hated Ralegh. Whether or not he influenced Cecil against Ralegh is not known. Probably Cecil did not need much influence to see that Ralegh was too powerful a man to be kept in a properly subordinate place, and to work his undoing.

Lord Henry Howard stopped at nothing to poison James's mind against Ralegh. He always referred to him as the arch-enemy, the most dangerous man in England. James was ready to believe all that he was told. The Earl of Essex he had at one time regarded as his chief supporter in England; after his death James used to refer to him as "my martyr." Therefore the rival of Essex, whom many men said had brought Essex to the scaffold, was not one likely to be looked upon with favour by James.

Cecil saw that Essex and Ralegh were the only men considerable enough to thwart his own project of supremacy. He had disposed of Essex; he had urged him on to his ruin by appearing to favour his ambitions. Ralegh remained. And Ralegh's overthrow was deliberately schemed, and quietly carried into execution.

In Cecil's scheme the most unpleasant aspect of the time is apparent. The acquisition of home and foreign knowledge was necessarily accompanied by an intricate system of espionage. It was incumbent upon a man in Cecil's position to use spies and agents at home and abroad, to check and recheck all information that came to him. He must keep himself in touch with the undercurrent of feeling, in order that he might be prepared for emergency; and to a large extent upon this knowledge, which he was bound to acquire, was based his own power, and on his power he was perfectly justified in thinking that the safety of the country rested. It

is for the moralist to decide between what is underhand and what is politic. It would seem that the two were inextricably mingled, not because of the depravity of the men living at that time, but simply because of the extreme difficulty of acquiring exact information. Morality has perhaps changed less than appears on the surface. Morality, however, has been modified by the application of the powers of steam and of electricity more perceptibly than by the spread of religion. The character of life has changed rather than the character of men. Deceit is a confession of weakness, either in the deceiver or in the deceived; and the range of man's power was then limited by barriers which no longer exist.

There was a demand for spies, and therefore, according to an unwritten law, there was an ample supply. An undesirable class of man was developed because the weakness of man in grappling with the problems of time and space made that class a necessity. Continual contact with such men infected the character of Cecil, as it influenced in a less degree the character of all the greatest men of the time. Lord Henry Howard, Cecil's right hand in his secret dealings with James, was the most complete example of the species. Lord Henry Howard is the type of man on whom it is pleasant to heap abuse. Abuse is a luxury. It relieves the feelings. There is no term of abuse which is not applicable to him and to his methods. But it is well to remember that, without Cecil, this tool (however sharp) would have been powerless to do mischief. Mischief—was what these two men accomplished mischievous to the country? They were scheming primarily to bring in James VI. of Scotland to the throne of England, and to do so without involving the country in civil war. And they succeeded. James

came to the throne, and civil war did not break out until some years after their death. It is interesting to know that the men who, as some think, freed England from tyranny were deeply influenced by Ralegh's writings, and it is almost certain that Ralegh was so far ahead of the thought of the time that he foresaw the disaster that must come to the country if it were hampered by a sovereign possessed with the prestige of divine right. His idea of government was far more modern in conception. Rumour, which is apt to be an exaggeration of the truth, relates that he was in favour of a republic. Probably he wanted a form of government far nearer to that which exists at the present day. He wanted a sovereign who was legally bound to be guided by his Council of State and by the wishes of the people. The days of Elizabeth's greatness showed the best features of tyranny, the days of her decline its worst features. And the worst feature is that undue power was placed in the hands of incompetent favourites.

After Elizabeth's death would have been the time to work the change without bloodshed. But that would have meant for Cecil that he must have shared his power with others. That was sufficient for Cecil. Always with Cecil his own prestige came first and blinded him to the ultimate benefit, which he sincerely wished might come to his country as it came to him.

But the warnings of Elizabeth's decline were not taken, and the prestige of her greatness was sufficient to carry on its tide the weight of her declining years and the reigns of two incompetent kings. Then matters came to such a point that only a bloody war could set them right, and the Puritan element, grown strong by abuses, triumphed, and its triumph swept away much that was valuable, and much that could ill be spared.

Sir Robert Cecil, however, and his tool, the Lord Henry Howard, determined to carry on the old tradition, and to make James VI. of Scotland King of England; and their scheme, as has been said, entailed the overthrow of Ralegh. They considered his overthrow necessary to the safety of their own position, and the safety of their own position was necessary to the welfare of the country. As a man who sees a little farther than the majority in matters of religion is apt to be called an atheist—Ralegh was called an atheist—so a man who sees a little farther in politics than the majority is apt to be called a traitor—Ralegh was called a traitor.

In November, 1601, the Duke of Lennox came into contact with Ralegh and Cobham. He had been sent by James to Henry IV. of France to win his support for James's claim to the English throne. Howard was furious that the Duke should be on terms of friendship with Ralegh; he wrote to the Earl of Mar suspicions of the Duke's fidelity, and to James that Ralegh and Cobham were his inveterate enemies. "Hell did never vomit up such a couple." That was not all. Howard knew that Cobham was weak and vacillating, he knew that many of Cobham's family were disposed to favour the Catholic cause. It would be easy to magnify any move of Cobham's in the Catholic direction into an absolute espousal of the Catholic claim. And what would be more likely than that the weak Cobham should be moved by the influence of his strong friend, Ralegh? In that way Ralegh could easily be caught in the toils of a conspiracy. The scheme was very subtle. To work its gradual fulfilment the Queen's mind must be turned against them. So Howard wrote to Cecil: "Hir Majesty must knowe the rage of their

discontent for want of being called to that height which they affect; and be made to taste the perill that grows out of discontented minds. . . . So that roundly Hir Majestie must daily and by divers meanes be let to know the world's apprehendinge hir deepe wisdome in discerning the secret flawes of their affections. She must see some advertisements from forrain parts of the grief which the Queene's enemies doo take at their (*i.e.* Ralegh and Cobham) sittinge out, hoping that their placinge in authority would so far alienate the people's reverent affection as some mischief would succeed of it. . . . Rawlie that in pride exceedeth all men alive finds no vent for paradoxis out of a Council board . . . and inspireth Cobham with his own passions. His wife as furious as Proserpina with failing of that restitution at Court which flatterie had moved her to expect." Cecil was instructed to inform the Queen of these things "that she may be more apt to receive impressions of more important reasons when time serves with opportunity." And then the crucial point of the deep plot to entrap Ralegh is clearly stated: "You must embark this gallant Cobham by your witt and interest, in some course the Spanish way as either may reveale his weaknesse or snare his ambition. . . . For my own part I account it impossible for him to escape the snares which wit may sett and weaknesse is apt to fall into." *

It is evident that Ralegh had some suspicion of what was being wrought against him; in sending a paper to the Queen against the proposals to declare a successor—the paper has unfortunately been lost—he writes a letter containing the following sentence:

* Major Martin Hume gives an account of the scheme itself with admirable clearness; his quotations from the letters of the period I use.

"Your Majestye may, perchance, speake herof to thos seeminge my great frinds, but I finde poore effects of that or any other supposed ametye. For, your Majesty havinge left mee I am left all alone in the worlde, and am sorry that ever I was att all. What I have donn is oat of zeale and love, and not by any incorngement: for I am only forgotten in all rights and in all affaires; and myne enemis have their wills and desires over mee. Ther ar many other things concerninge your Majesty's present service, which, meethinks are not, as they ought, remembered, and the tymes pass away, unmesured, of which more profitt might be taken."

He may have known that Lord Henry Howard was mischievously inclined towards him; Howard had always been his enemy. But it is unlikely that he could have suspected Cecil, for Cecil was at the pains to show all the appearance of friendship both to him and to Lady Ralegh.

Yet Cecil was, from the beginning of his own correspondence, working against his friend. "Your Majestie," he writes to King James, "will fynde it, in your case that a choyce election of a feaw in the present wilbe of more use than any general acclamation of many." And in his third letter he praises Howard for his fidelity, and refers bitterly to Ralegh.

"I do profess in the presence of Hym that knoweth and searcheth all men's harts, that if I dyd not sometyme cast a stone into the mouth of these gaping crabbs (*i.e.* Ralegh and Cobham) when they are in their prodigall humour of discourses, they wold not stick to confess dayly how contrary it is to their nature to resolve to be under your soverainty; though they confess—Ralegh especially—that (*rebus sic stantibus*) naturall pollicy forceth them to keep on foot such a trade against the

great day of mart. In all which light and soddain humours of his, though I do no way chock him, because he shall not think I reject his freedome or his affection, but alwaies . . . use contestation with him that I neyther had nor ever wold *in individus* contemplate future idea, nor ever hoped for more than justice in time of change; yet under pretext of extraordinary care of his well-doing, I have seemed to disswade him from ingaging himself to farr, even for himself; much more therefore to forbeare to assume for me or my present intentions. Let me, therefore, presume thus farr upon your Majesties favour that whatsoever he (*i.e.* Ralegh) shall take uppon him to say for me, uppon any new humor of kyndnes,—wherof sometime he wilbe replete, uppon the recept of privat benefite,—you will no more believe it, if it come in other shape, be it never so much in my commendation—then that his own conscience thoght it needfull for him to undertake to keep me from any humor of inanity; when, I, thank God, my greatest adversaries and my owne sowle have ever acquited me from that, of all other vices. Wold God I were as free from ofense towards God in seeking for private affection to support a person whom most religious men do hold *anathema*."

This is probably one of the most crafty letters that even the astute Cecil ever wrote. He wants James to think badly of Ralegh, and he has no reason which he can urge for this. He is afraid that James may suspect his motives. He is afraid that James may hear from others of the friendship between him and Ralegh, that Ralegh may speak well of him. So he warns James against this: he hints that Ralegh will speak well of him only to gain some private benefit, fearing Cecil's inanity or animosity. Then, lest James should suspect him of

such a defect, he hastens to explain that animosity is quite foreign to his nature. Only men like Ralegh would suspect him of it. Indeed, his heart is so kind that he must needs have affection for Ralegh in spite of all, in spite even (and this is a touch which would go far with the religious James) of the fact that many godly men consider Ralegh anathema, indeed, little better than an atheist.

On the surface nothing was changed. Ralegh continued to make efforts to rouse fresh interest in his colonization schemes, both in Virginia and in Guiana, but without success. He joined with Cecil in organizing privateering enterprises. He wrote to Cecil about the threatened invasion of Ireland by Spain, and warned him on no account to put trust in the friendly protestations of Florence McCarthy, whom he well knew to be a rebel. He continued to devote much energy to the duties which his Governorship of Jersey entailed. And all the while Howard and Cecil were watching him and planning his destruction. They were waiting for him to fall into one of the snares which were set for him; it mattered not whether the decoy was Arabella Stuart or the Infanta and her husband, the Count Arembergh. Cobham about this time was in communication with the Count, who was Archduke of the Netherlands, and who desired to make a peace between England and Spain. James and Cecil too desired peace with Spain, but did not wish it to come through any other channel but their own. So they watched Cobham that they might surprise him in an indiscretion, as they had watched him in his dealings with Arabella Stuart. And once they held him they could easily lay hands on the friend who had influenced the poor impressionable fellow to take a traitorous step. It would be incredible to all that such

a man as Cobham was known to be could have taken such a step on his own initiative.

Failure is the cause of many crimes. While a great financier is successful, everything is forgotten in the rush to make his acquaintance and to make money. No one is indiscreet enough to inquire into his methods. If he should fail to be successful, it fares ill with him. The rush to leave him is as swift as the previous rush to be near him. His methods are exposed relentlessly, and men blush with shame to think that such a scoundrel could have been in their midst. The blush is the token of innocence (easily paid) to morality. That was recognized to be the position in all the various projects about the Succession. Whoever failed became a traitor. Exactly what Ralegh did or did not do, is not known. It is enough that he eventually got into the power of Cecil. He failed, that is to say, he was not sufficiently alert to suspect the intrigues of his friends against him.

The last years of the Queen's reign are as tragic as the last years of the woman's life. The strength of the country was in a strange way bound up with the strength of Elizabeth, and as her strength declined so did the greatness of the country. Never has a woman used her power with such magnificent results. England was the husband, for whom her life was lived, and all the greatest men in England lived fiercely to win glory and her smile of approval; and they strove the harder because within them was the knowledge (such knowledge was an inspiration) that their great Queen could also be a beautiful woman to the man who found favour in her eyes. She lived greatly, and created almost an age of great men with such puissance did she employ one side of a woman's creative power. A child is not the only new life which a woman may produce, if she has once outgrown the

little limits of what is miscalled purity. Coarse, as in many ways the Elizabethan age undoubtedly was, men did not fall into the fantastic error of confusing celibacy with chastity. The body had full scope, and in consequence the spirit throve untrammelled.

But Elizabeth was growing old. To the end she kept her grip on life; but effort was necessary. In that effort alone weakness became apparent. Strength was used not to plunder life as she had plundered it hitherto, but to withstand its encroachments. She would not yield. There is something great and yet something infinitely pathetic, childish even, in her indomitable will to resist the slow inevitable power of Time.

At last illness, which she had always dreaded with superstitious horror, and against which she had always defended herself with every charm which superstition could devise, laid hold on her.

Sir Robert Carey, who was Lord Warden of the Border, came to the Court, which was then at Richmond, in March, 1603, to see his friends and to renew his acquaintance. He found the Queen ill-disposed. "I found her in one of her withdrawing rooms sitting low upon her cushions. She called me to her. I kissed her hand, and told her, It was my chiefest happiness to see her in safety and health, which I wished might long continue.

"She took me by the hand, and wrung it hard, and said, 'No, Robin, I am not well!' and then discoursed with me of her indisposition, and that her heart had been sad and heavy for ten or twelve days: and in her discourse, she fetched not so few as forty or fifty great sighs.

"I was grieved at the first to see her in this plight: for in all my lifetime before, I never knew her fetch a

sigh, but when the Queen of Scots was beheaded. . . . I used the best words I could to persuade her from this melancholy humour; but I found by her, it was too deep rooted in her heart, and hardly to be removed. This was upon a Saturday night: and she gave command that the Great Closet should be prepared for her to go to Chapel the next morning."

But they waited in vain for her coming, she was not well enough to attend the service. From that day her body grew weaker and weaker. She felt that death was approaching, and grimly she welcomed the approach of death. With a kind of fierce disdain she refused all food, and she refused to leave the chair in which she sat waiting. Night and day in silence she sat staring in front of her, face to face with death. Music was played to her in the hope that it might dispel the black gloom which had settled upon her. She did not hear the music. She sat motionless in her chair staring in front of her, greater than Cleopatra, but without the solace of the asp's quick kiss. Her eyes had no expression in them now. Her waiting-women were terrified. Cecil came to her and told her "to content the people she *must* go to bed." Then she spoke, saying that "*must* was not a word fit to be used to princes;" she dismissed Cecil from her presence, and as he went away she spoke again. "Little man, little man," she said, "if your father had lived ye durst not have said so much, but ye know I must die, and that makes ye so presumptuous." Lord Admiral Howard, Earl of Nottingham, remained with her. At last she spoke to him. "My lord, I am tied with a chain of iron about my neck." He bade her have courage, but she answered in a low voice, "I am tied, I am tied, and the case is altered with me."

Her waiting women were terrified. The powers of

darkness seemed at play in the Palace at Richmond. Lady Southwell affirms that the queen of hearts was nailed under the Queen's chair, the nail through the forehead; "they durst not pull it out remembering that the like thing was used to the old Countess of Sussex and afterwards proved a witchcraft for which certain persons were hanged as instruments of the same." Lady Guildford left the Queen, as she thought, sleeping, but saw her walking from one room to another; she hurried back, and there she found the Queen still, as she thought, sleeping. Lady Guildford swore that it must have been the Queen's ghost which she had seen, while the Queen was yet living.

At length, after this long vigil of four days and four nights staring in the face of death, she was constrained to lie down in her bed. But the tired old woman might not die in peace; while she breathed she was Queen of England.

"By signs she called for her Council: and by putting her hand to her head," writes Sir Robert Carey, "when the King of Scots was named to succeed her, they all knew he was the man she desired should reign after her." It is easy to see how the astute Cecil would construe the dying Queen's movements into the right meaning for his own schemes. There is something fantastic in this solemn farce played round the great Queen's death-bed, made more fantastic and more terrible by the fact that it sprang from her own strange detestation of naming a successor. "Being given over by all and at the last gasp keeping still her sense in everything and giving apt answers, though she spake but seldom, having then a sore throat, the council required admittance, and she wished to wash her throat that she might answer freely to what they demanded which was

to know whom she would have for king. Her throat troubling her much they desired her to hold up her finger when they named who she liked; whereupon they named the King of France (this was to try her intellect), she never stirred; the King of Scotland, she made no sign; then they named Lord Beauchamp—this was the heir of Seymour . . . and words came to the dying lips, 'I will have—no rascal's son—in my seat—but one—worthy—to be a king.'" The effort of speech convulsed her: she put her hands to her head: her head was in pain: and Cecil pointed out how evident it was that she meant, a crowned king should rule in her stead. That is the irony of things: the State left: the Church entered.

"About six at night she made signs for the Archbishop, and her Chaplains to come to her, at which time I went in with them; and sat upon my knees full of tears to see that heavy sight.

"Her Majesty lay upon her back; with one hand in the bed, and the other without.

"The Archbishop kneeled down by her, and examined her first of her faith: and she so punctually answered all his several questions by lifting up her eyes and holding up her hand, as it was a comfort to all beholders.

"Then the good man told her plainly, What she was; and what she was come to: and though she had been long a great Queen here upon earth, yet shortly she was to yield an account of her stewardship to the King of Kings.

"After this he began to pray: and all that were by did answer him. After he had continued long in prayer, till the old man's knees were weary, he blessed her, and meant to rise and leave her.

"The Queen made a sign with her hand.

"My sister Scroope, knowing her meaning, told the Bishop, the Queen desired he would pray still.

"He did so for a long half-hour after, and then thought to have left her. The second time she made sign to have him continue in prayer. He did so for half an hour more, with earnest cries to God for her soul's health, which he uttered with that fervency of spirit as the Queen, to all our sight, much rejoiced thereat: and gave testimony to us all of her Christian and comfortable end. By this time it grew late; and every one departed: all but her women that attended her."

That evening Queen Elizabeth died.

Every precaution had been taken that the news of her death might not precede the Council's power of action. Every gate was locked; every approach was guarded. But Sir Robert Carey, the dead Queen's kinsman, realized, like many another, that all his means of life were now at the disposal of the new king, whoever he might be, and so he determined to be the bearer of the tidings to James of Scotland. He had quietly made his preparations for the emergency, and his sister, Philadelphia Lady Scroope, had in her possession a ring which would prove to James that the news of the Queen's death was authentic. It was necessary to take every precaution against treachery in such a crisis. How far Cecil knew of Carey's complicity with James is not certain. Probably James had kept it secret: he was not apt to trust any man wholly.

Carey found some difficulty in getting away, but he gave money to the right men and succeeded. Lady Scroope had been unable to give him the sapphire ring, "but waiting at the window till she saw him at the outside of the gate she threw it out to him; and he well

knew to what purpose he received it." Efforts were made to detain him, but he managed to evade them, and next night at ten o'clock he started his great ride to the north, to bear the tidings to James at Edinburgh. That Thursday night he rode to Doncaster, which is one hundred and sixty-two miles from London.

"The Friday night I came to my own house at Widdrington (298 miles), and presently took order with my Deputies to see the Borders kept in quiet; which they had much to do; and gave order, the next morning, the King of Scotland should be proclaimed King of England and at Morpeth and at Alnwick. Very early on Saturday I took horse for Edinburgh and came to Norham (331 miles) about twelve at noon. So that I might well have been with the King at supper time: but I got a great fall by the way, and my horse, with one of his heels, gave me a great blow on the head that made me shed much blood. It made me so weak, that I was forced to ride a soft pace after: so that the King was newly gone to bed by the time I knocked at the gate."

The King received him immediately and at once asked him, on hearing of the Queen's death, what message he brought from the Council. Sir Robert Carey bore no message, but he gave the King the blue ring; and the King said, "It is enough. I know by this that you are a true messenger."

Every attention was paid to the messenger, worn out by his great ride and his fall. In four days he recovered and he was sworn one of the gentlemen of the bed-chamber; "and presently I helped to take off his clothes and stayed till he was in bed.

"After this, there came, daily, Gentlemen and Noblemen from our Court; and the King set down a fixed day for his departure towards London."

The day fixed was April 5th, 1603.

THE HIGHE AND MIGHTIE PRINCE, Iames THE SIXT, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, KINGE OF SCOTLANDE. R.E. *fecit.*

CHAPTER XV

THE TRIAL

Arrival of James VI. of Scotland—Ralegh in immediate disfavour—Gondomar comments on James—Ralegh accused of treason—Cobham and Brooke—Ralegh attempts suicide—Cobham's retractions—November 17—And the trial's infamy.

SLOWLY King James moved on his royal progress to London to the acclamation of the people of all the towns through which he passed. "The Council of State and the Nobility, no doubt assisted with the Spirit of Truth, considering the infallible right of our Sovereign Lord, King James, took such order that the news of the Queen's death should no sooner be spread to deject the hearts of the people, but, at the instant, they should be comforted with the Proclaiming of the King." The people were intoxicated with the prospect of the new king coming peaceably to reign over the kingdom, for the fear of a civil war had been imminent and universal. The country burst into a salvo of welcome; a new era of peace and prosperity was to be inaugurated. Scotland now joined to England lessened the fear of invasion. "They now began duly to think upon his unmatched virtues, which never the most malicious enemy could impeach . . . they now considered his affability mercy justice and magnanimity." The hopes of every party ran high. The Catholics knew that he was inclined towards friendliness; the Churchmen felt sure that they who had been chief instigators in bringing him to the

throne of England, could rely upon his support. The Puritans had heard of his godliness and his tolerance to their views. Each vied with the other in sounding the praises of the new King. "But our King coming through the North," writes Mr. Arthur Wilson, "(Banquetting and Feasting by the way) the applause of the people in so obsequious and submissive a manner (still admiring change) was checkt by an honest plain Scotsman . . . with a propheticall expression. *This people will spoil a gud King.* The King as unused, so tired with multitudes, especially in his Huntinge (which he did as he went) caused an inhibition to be published, to restrain his people from hunting him. Happily being fearful of so great a concourse, as this novelty produced, the old hatred betwixt the Borderers not yet forgotten, might make him apprehend it to be of a greater extent: though it was generally imputed to a desire of enjoying his recreations without interruption."

Few kings have received such a welcome; few kings have proved themselves so unworthy as the event proved James. But the prestige of his welcome and his rescue from the Gunpowder Plot hid his true character for many years from the people under the obscuring cloud of sentiment.

> "Now expectation, tickling skittish spirits
> Sets all to hazard."

Every one connected with the Court and Court appointments hastened to meet him and win his good will: and James was lavish in his treatment. He created innumerable knights, and raised so many to the peerage that "some unhappy fancy pasted up a Pasquil in Pauls, wherein he pretended an art to help weak memories to a competent knowledge of the names of the Nobility."

Sir Robert Cecil was created Baron of Essingdon and soon after Viscount Cranborn and Earl of Salisbury. Lord Henry Howard was made Earl of Northampton.

During the Queen's last illness Ralegh was in Devonshire. Directly he heard of the news of her death he hastened with Sir Robert Cross to pay his respects to the new sovereign. Cecil advised him to spare himself the trouble; but he did not listen to Cecil's advice. He came to the King at Burghley House, trusting in his power to impress himself favourably upon the King. But James had been too carefully primed against him. Old Aubrey's gossip bears the stamp of truth; it is so characteristic of James, that he should have met the great Ralegh with a pun upon his name—"I have heard but rawly of thee." Ralegh spoke with James about business connected with the Duchy of Cornwall; he wanted a royal letter authorizing the continuance of legal process, and a warrant to stop "the waste of woods and parks" which he said was due to Lord Treasurer Buckhurst's heedlessness. James listened, and gave instructions to his secretary, Sir Thomas Lake, to write the necessary letters as quickly as possible, that he might be rid of the man whom he feared and disliked. "Let them be delivered speedily that Ralegh may be gone again."

James was not slow in compassing Ralegh's downfall. Two weeks passed by and Ralegh was summoned to the Council Chamber, where the Lord President informed him that James no longer desired his services as Captain of the Guard; that the honour had been conferred upon the King's countryman, Sir Thomas Erskine, to whom Ralegh was bidden to hand all appurtenances of the office.

Ralegh had increased James's dislike of him by

suggesting that articles should be framed which should prevent the King's countrymen from devouring the kingdom like locusts. The advisability of such a measure became manifest to all later, when it was too late. Naturally the first man to suffer was Ralegh himself. But the indignity was glossed over—not for Ralegh's sake so much as to hinder unpleasant gossip about the new appointment—by increasing Ralegh's salary as Governor of Jersey by three hundred pounds per annum. Ralegh's loss was directly due to Cecil, to whom James had given the disposal of the office, and who gained new favour with James by electing a Scotchman. For seven weeks Ralegh enjoyed the added emolument.

His last interview with James took place at Beddington Park, in Surrey, which was the seat of his uncle, Sir Nicolas Carew. There Ralegh, anxious to prove his loyalty to the King, gave him his "Discourse touching a War with Spain, and of the protecting of the Netherlands," and offered to carry on his enterprises against Spain (he always had his great Guiana scheme in the front of his mind) by offering "to carry two thousand men to invade him without the King's charge." He could not have made a more inauspicious suggestion to the timorous James; but Ralegh did not realize how the King was influenced against him to such an extent that he would be quick to think that the man who could raise so many men to fight the Spaniard, could at less expense raise them to fight his own Majesty. Moreover, James, from no high motives, but merely from terror at the sight even of a drawn sword, hated war and fighting of any kind, and distrusted, as is shown by his choice of favourites, the quality of bravery in others. All Ralegh's grip of a situation, his clearness of exposition,

his courage would be against him in a conference with James. The standard by which a man was judged had changed, now that the great Queen was in her grave. The clever Gondomar summed James up to a nicety when he wrote, without any need (for once) of diplomacy, "James has a vanity so enormous that, in order to make him play his adversary's game, you have simply to let James believe that it is from himself that the adversary has learnt to know how to play." His favourites were men who were more adroit in the use of poison than in the use of the sword. It is easy to imagine what were the feelings of James as Ralegh propounded his masterly exposition of the Spanish situation, and offered his own services. There would be something burlesque in this interview between the brave man and the coward, if absolute power of life and death were not in the hands of the coward, and if the coward had not already determined to use his power to the detriment of the brave man.

The carefully planned toils were closing round Ralegh. Copley was arrested in Sussex, and in consequence of his first examination, which was dated July 12, George Brooke was arrested two days afterwards, and orders were given for the arrest of Lord Grey and Sir Griffin Markham. On the 14th or 15th, Cobham, George Brooke's brother, was examined by the Council. They were accused of complicity with the "Treason of the Priests." Now, treason at that time was formidable, and it was necessary to treat it in a summary fashion. In every nation there must be a large number of discontented people who would combine if there was a man of sufficient influence to lead them in any way; very little was known in spite of spies; man dealt with man; there was no proper way of gauging public opinion; a spark might set all the disaffected into a dangerous fire.

Now discontent is aired in the newspapers; every one can read what happens in Parliament. Treason is no longer a thing to dread. But then it was a constant danger, and the least suspicion of treasonable practices was sufficient to condemn a man to a death of horrible ignominy. Justice was swift but not unerring. A man had not only to keep clear of treason, but must have the wit to avoid even the suspicion. It is easy to see how the power thus put into the hands of the Government, though such power was essential to its safety and the welfare of the citizens, could be abused. And there is probably no instance in history where its abuse is more conspicuous than in the treatment of Ralegh. Cecil feared Ralegh; James feared Ralegh. There is nothing so unscrupulous, nothing so dangerous and so cruel as fear. The world lay obscured by the dark cloud of Time and of Space; and terrible scope was given to fear by the insuperable darkness.

The suspected man was shut up alone, and a Bishop or a Judge or a Councillor was told off to examine him; and the man knew quite well that his answers might be made more satisfactory by the help of the rack, and that his examiner would earn reward and distinction by discovering treason and his associates in treason. The promise, too, of a pardon was often dangled before his eyes to loosen his tongue. Such promises were not often kept. Brooke implicated Cobham, and Cobham implicated Ralegh.

George Brooke, Cobham's brother, was a light-hearted fellow, who was drawn into listening to the priest's conspiracy, because he had been disappointed of some small office upon which he had set his heart. To Bishop Bancroft was assigned the task of examining him. Large rewards were offered the Bishop if he were

successful in finding out the details of the conspiracy. "The only way to procure favour is to open all that possibly you can" were the words with which the good Bishop began his inquiry. And gradually he played upon the fears and hopes of the prisoner to such an extent that the wretched man burst into a kind of rapture of confession, stating all he knew and all he imagined to be fact, about the treason against King James. Day after day the examination was continued relentlessly; statements made by other prisoners, or said to have been made, were told him; lists of written questions were given him. It would have taken a man of extraordinary strength and control to have kept his balance under such circumstances. George Brooke was a very ordinary man. On July 17 he said: "The conspirators among themselves thought Sir Walter Ralegh a fit man to be of the action." The good Bishop did not leave such an important statement undeveloped; under his careful management the statement by the end of August had grown; Brooke was ready to swear that Ralegh and Cobham had resolved to kill the King and his cubs.

Cobham, too, was examined in the same relentless manner. He was a little stronger than his brother, George Brooke, but no match for the examiners. He began by steadfastly denying everything; his nerves, however, could not bear the terrible suspense. He had been suddenly removed to solitary confinement; the horror of a dreadful death loomed over him. He did not know who might be arrested, who might desire his death. At length some of the confessions of his brother were disclosed to him; but the examiners named Ralegh, not Brooke, as the authority; and Cobham, knowing that Ralegh must have invented or guessed at such

things, broke into an outcry of disgust (who can blame him!), "Oh traitor, oh villain! I will now tell you all the truth." And he said that he had never entered into these courses but by Ralegh's instigation, and that Ralegh would never let him alone. It was very cleverly done by the examiner. Cobham was led into confessing, helped by questions from George Brooke's statements, that "he had conferred with Arenberg about procuring 500,000 or 600,000 crowns from the King of Spain; and that nothing should be done with the money until he had spoken with Sir Walter Ralegh, for distribution of the money to them which were discontented in England." Then part of a letter from Ralegh to Cecil—for Cecil knew much of the intercourse between Arenberg and England in his official capacity—was shown to Cobham, in which it was written, "If da Renzy were not secured, the matter would not be discovered, for da Renzy would fly; yet if he were then apprehended, it would give matter of suspicion to Lord Cobham." Naturally Cobham, reading such words at the moment when they were shown him, constructed them into his death sentence, and broke out into fury of denunciation sufficient for the bad purpose of the examiners—to close the net round Ralegh. Lord Henry Howard justly remarks in his "Adversaria," "It is an old observation of jugglers to make others give fire to the piece after they themselves have charged it, and thereby put them into the peril of recoil or breaking, if any mischief follow." Lord Henry Howard may be taken as an authority on this subject.

Immediately after Cobham's outbreak, Ralegh was arrested and sent to the Tower, to await the slow, strange process of justice. His arrest took place at the beginning of August. Almost immediately the Government

of Jersey was transferred to Sir John Peyton, Governor of the Tower. James in his grant stated that the post was forfeited by Sir Walter Ralegh through the grievous treason against the Crown. With the King thus quickly convinced of his guilt, Ralegh knew that he had small chance of proving his innocence. Dismay came upon him and despair. His hopes fell from a great height and were broken. Suddenly shut closely in by four stone walls, he was obliged to wait the slow approach of an ignominious death—a death which would involve the ruin of his family, and the immediate disgrace of his name. He was a man of action; he could not sit and do nothing but think. Despair brought madness to him; he tried to kill himself in a fit of impotent despair. This is the way in which Cecil, once Ralegh's friend, writes of it. "Although lodged and attended as well as in his own house, yet one afternoon, while divers of us were in the Tower examining these prisoners, Sir Walter Ralegh attempted to have murdered himself. Whereof, when we were advertised, we came to him and found him in some agony, seeming to be unable to bear his misfortune, and protesting innocency, with carelessness of life. In that humour he had wounded himself under the right pap, but no way mortally; being in truth rather a cut than a stab."

On August 13, Ralegh was examined about Cobham's negotiations with Arenberg. His statement was: "Lord Cobham offered me 10,000 crowns of the money, for the furthering of the Peace between England and Spain; and he said that I should have it within three days. I told him, 'When I see the money I will make you an answer.' For I thought it one of his ordinary idle conceits, and therefore made no account thereof. But this was as I think before Count Arenberg's coming

over." And in a letter written to the Lords of the Council a few days after this examination, in which he proclaims his innocence of any treasonable practice, he breaks out, after enumerating his exploits against Spain, in bitterness at the irony of the charge. "Alas, to what end should we live in the world if all the endeavours of so many testimonies shall be blown off with one blast of breath, or be prevented by one man's charge."

Lord Cobham had made several retractions of his outburst against Ralegh, both at Ralegh's instigation and on his own initiative. Sir George Harvey, the Governor of the Tower, was discreet enough to keep back the latter retraction until one month after the trial, when he showed Cecil a letter in which Cobham wrote of his accusation, "God is my wittness, it doth troble my contiens." Terror had unhinged Cobham's mind, he accused Ralegh and retracted his accusations in such a way that one retraction more or less mattered little; Sir George Harvey's sense of duty, however, is significant.

The indictment was drawn up at Staines on the 21st of September. Three months were allowed to elapse before the trial took place. Meanwhile, Sir Francis Godolphin, High Sheriff of Cornwall, was authorized to take the muster of the county, "the Commission of Lieutenancy granted to Sir Walter Ralegh being become void and determined." In October Arenberg left England for Flanders, overwhelmed with evidence of the King's favour. The plague was raging in London, and accordingly the trial was to be held at Winchester. Sir William Waad was ordered to bring Sir Walter Ralegh to Wolvesey Castle—the episcopal palace of Winchester. Waad wrote to Cecil, "It was hob or nob whether Ralegh should have been brought alive through such multitudes of unruly people as did

exclaim against him. We took the best order we could in setting watches through the streets, both in London and the suburbs. If one hare-brain fellow amongst so great multitudes had begun to set upon him—as they were very near to do it—no entreaty or means could have prevailed; the fury and tumult of the people was so great." Ralegh was driven in his own carriage; he faced the mob with disdain.

On the 17th of November the trial began; and the after comment of one of "these my judges" was true: "That trial injured and degraded the justice of England." The Commissioners were eleven in number: Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, who had fought with Ralegh at Cadiz; Charles Blount, Earl of Devonshire; Lord Henry Howard; Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury; Edward, Lord Wotton of Morley; Sir William Waad; Sir John Stanhope, Vice-Chamberlain; the Lord Chief Justice of England, Popham; the Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, Anderson; Mr. Justice Gawdie and Mr. Justice Warburton. Coke, as Attorney-General, conducted the prosecution, and was assisted by Serjeant Hale. The Clerk of the Crown Office, having read the commission of Oyer and Terminer, the prisoner was bidden to hold up his hand, and then the indictment was read, the gist of which is as follows:—

That he did conspire and go about to deprive the King of his government, to raise up sedition within the realm, to alter religion, to bring in the Roman superstition, and to procure foreign enemies to invade the kingdom. That the Lord Cobham, the 9th of June last, did meet with the said Sir Walter Ralegh, in Durham House, and then and there had conference with him how to advance Arabella Stuart to the crown and royal throne of this kingdom. And that then and there it was agreed

that Cobham should treat with Arenberg, ambassador from the Archduke of Austria, to obtain of him 600,000 crowns to bring to pass their intended treason. It was agreed that Cobham should go to the Archduke Albert to procure him to advance the pretended title of Arabella. From thence, knowing that Albert had not sufficient means to maintain his own army in the Low Countries, Cobham should go to Spain, to procure the king to assist and further her pretended title. It was agreed, the better to effect all this conspiracy, that Arabella should write three letters, one to the Archduke, another to the King of Spain, and a third to the Duke of Savoy, and promise three things—

First.—To establish a firm peace between England and Spain.

Secondly.—To tolerate the popish and Roman superstition.

Thirdly.—To be ruled by them in contracting of her marriage.

And further, that Cobham and his brother Brooke met on the 9th of June last, and Cobham told Brooke all these treasons; to the which treasons Brooke gave his assent and did join himself to all these. And after, on the Thursday following, Cobham and Brooke did speak these words, *that there would never be a good world in England till the King* (meaning our sovereign lord) *and his cubs* (meaning the royal issue) *were taken away.*

And the more to disable and deprive the King of his crown, and to confirm the said Cobham in his intents Ralegh did publish a book falsely written against the most just and royal title of the King, which book Cobham after that received of him, and did deliver unto Brooke. And further by the traitorous instigation of Ralegh,

ALBERTVS PRINCEPS COMES AREMBERG:
PRINCEPS BARBANCON COM. AIGREMONT^AN
ET RVP.^IN ARDENNA, AVREI. EQVES ETC:

Cobham did incite Brooke to move Arabella to write to the three forenamed princes to procure them to advance her title. Further, Cobham, by the instigation of Ralegh did write letters to the Count Arenberg for the obtaining of the 600,000 crowns, which money by other letters Count Arenberg did promise to perform the payment of. And then did Cobham promise to Ralegh that when he had received the said money he would deliver 8000 crowns to him.

To the indictment Sir Walter Ralegh pleaded NOT GUILTY. Sir Walter Ralegh was then asked whether he would take exception to any of the jury; and he made answer, "I know none of them; they are all Christians and honest gentlemen. I except against none." He did not know that the original jurymen had been changed; he did not know that the names of three near servants to the Queen Elizabeth had been erased from the panel overnight, being thought unsuitable for their purpose.

Earl Suffolk.—You, gentlemen of the King's learned counsel follow the same course as you did the other day.

Ralegh.—My lord, I pray you I may answer the points particularly as they are delivered, by reason of the weakness of my memory and sickness.

Lord Chief Justice Popham.—After the King's learned counsel have delivered all the evidence, Sir Walter, you may answer particularly to what you will.

Then spake the King's Serjeant at Law, by name Hele; of this man Edwards points out that "he was more notable as a brawler and a buffoon—and also as a moneylender, in which capacity he hoped to win a very large stake by the ruin of Lord Cobham—than as a lawyer." The tone of his short speech may be gathered from this typical sentence at the conclusion. "It

appears that Cobham took Ralegh to be either a god or an idol. Cobham endeavours to set up a new king, or governor: God forbid mine eyes should ever see so unhappy a change! As for the Lady Arabella, she, upon my conscience hath no more title to the crown than I have, which before God I utterly renounce. Cobham, a man bred in England, hath no experience abroad; but Ralegh, a man of great wit, military and a swordman. Now whether these things were bred in a hollow tree, I leave to them to speak of, who can speak far better than myself."

Sir Edward Coke, the King's Attorney, then rose to his feet. It is well to remember that it was Coke's business, as the King's Attorney, to prove Ralegh guilty of treason, and that as he had almost no evidence in his support, his business was one of extreme difficulty. Cobham's accusation was his only evidence, and that must be used with caution, owing to Cobham's retractations. The trial was of the utmost importance; his professional reputation was at stake; the very difficulty put him on his mettle. He rose magnificently to the occasion. With such evidence at his disposal he could not quietly prove Ralegh's guilt. His chief weapons were the appeal to the jury's loyalty and abuse of the prisoner—especially abuse, by which he hoped to browbeat him. His speech was long and learned. He began by dividing the mischief of treason into three divisions—imitation, supportation, and defence, and by enlarging upon the main conspiracy of the priests Watson and Copley, with which, as Ralegh pointed out, he was in no way connected, even in the indictment. Undeterred, Coke continued his oration. He gave instances of treason, he defined treason at length, and then he suddenly began to praise the character of King

James, and, turning angrily to Ralegh, exclaimed: "To whom Sir Walter did you bear malice? To the royal children?" To which Ralegh answered: "Master Attorney, I pray you to whom or to what end speak you all this? I protest I do not understand what a word of this means, except it be to tell me news. What is the treason of Markham and the priests to me?"

Coke. "I will then come close to you. I will prove you to be the most notorious traitor that ever came to the bar."

Ralegh. "Your words cannot condemn me; my innocency is my defence. *Prove* against me any one thing of the many that you have broken, and I will confess all the Indictment, and that I am the most horrible traitor that ever lived."

Coke. "Nay I will prove all. Thou art a monster; thou hast an English face, but a Spanish heart."

Then Coke proceeded to give a minute account of Cobham's plots in such a way that, as Edwards notes, only the most unprejudiced and attentive listener would fail to be trapped into thinking that he was relating the plots of Ralegh. The device was clever, but it was unscrupulous. Ralegh, in spite of his recent imprisonment and his imminent danger, remained master of himself and of the situation. He withstood Coke's implications as resolutely as he withstood Coke's abuse. "What is that to me?" he asked the Court, after Coke had ended his clever recital of Cobham's practices. "What is that to me? I do not hear yet that you have spoken one word against *me*. Here is no treason of mine done. If my Lord Cobham be a traitor, what is that to me?"

At this the King's Attorney broke into savage abuse. "All that he did was by thy instigation, thou

viper; for I *thou* thee, thou traitor! I will prove thee the rankest traitor in all England."

But Ralegh was not to be inveigled into losing his presence of mind by Coke's insults, as Coke, of course, knowing Ralegh's temperament, intended him to do. Never did Ralegh show greater proof of his power than at this his trial, when circumstances were pressing most hardly upon him; he answered—there is the suavity of strength in his answer—"No, no, Master Attorney, I am no traitor. Whether I live or die I shall stand as true a subject as ever the King hath. *You* may call me a traitor, at your pleasure; yet it becomes not a man of quality or virtue to do so. But I take comfort in it. It is all that you can do, for I do not yet hear that you charge me with any treason."

The Lord Chief Justice Popham was here obliged to come to the help of the King's Attorney, who was finding the case more difficult than he expected. It was important that the people present, by whom the news of the trial would be spread through England, should not be impressed in the prisoner's favour. He said, realizing that Coke's last *coup* had been a failure: "Sir Walter Ralegh, Master Attorney speaks out of the zeal of his duty for the service of the King, and you for your life; be patient, on both sides."

Then Coke proceeded: "I charge Sir Walter Ralegh with contriving and conspiring all this that I have recited. And now I will read my proofs for it." He did so. That is to say, he read the most incriminating of the confessions which the distraught Lord Cobham had made. While Coke read this Declaration, there was silence in the hall—certainly a haunting silence. Then Ralegh spoke. "This is absolutely all the evidence that can be brought against me. But now I

beseech you, hear me. I was examined at Windsor touching the Surprising Treason; next of plotting for Arabella; thirdly of practices with the Lord Cobham. From all which God knows I was free, for I never was privy to any of them. It is true that I suspected that the Lord Cobham kept intelligence with D'Arenbergh. For I knew that long since—in the late Queen's time—he held that course with him in the Low Countries, as was well known to my Lord Treasurer, and to my Lord Cecil. La Renzi being a man also well known to me, I, seeing him and the Lord Cobham together, thought that was the time they both had been to Count D'Arenberg. I gave intimation thereof. But I was willed by my Lord Cecil not to speak of this; because the King, at the first coming of D'Arenbergh, would not give him occasion of suspicion. Wherefore I wrote to the Lord Cecil that if La Renzi were not taken, the matter would not be discovered. Yet if he were then apprehended, it would give matter of suspicion to the Lord Cobham. This letter of mine being presently showed to the Lord Cobham, he presently entered into a rage against me and spake bitterly and railingly of me; yet ere he came to the stairs'-foot, he repented him, and, as I heard, acknowledged that he had done me wrong."

Ralegh paused: up till now he had been speaking to the Court and to the jury, quietly replying to the charges that had been brought against him. Now he turned to Sir Edward Coke, the King's Attorney, and made this speech, magnificent in its effect even in the version of the reporter, even after more than three hundred years, now when no one feels anything but great friendliness towards Spain; you can see the man draw himself up to his full height, the man who had risked his life for his

country—Spain's most dreadful enemy, as he faced the attorney whose business it was to brow-beat him to ruin.

"Master Attorney, whether to favour or to disable my Lord Cobham you speak as you will of him; yet he is not such a babe as you make him. He hath dispositions of such violence, which his best friends could never temper. But it is very strange that I, at this time, should be thought to plot with the Lord Cobham knowing him a man that hath neither love nor following; and myself, at this time having resigned a place of my best command, in an office I had in Cornwall. I was not so bare of sense but I saw that, if even this State was strong, it was now that we have the kingdom of Scotland united whence we were wont to fear all our troubles; Ireland quieted where our forces were wont to be divided; Denmark assured whom before we were always wont to have in jealousy; the Low Countries our nearest neighbours. And, instead of a Lady whom Time had surprised, we had now an active King who would be present at his own businesses. For me at this time to make myself a Robin Hood, a Watt Tyler, a Kett, or a Jack Cade! I was not so mad! I knew the state of Spain well—his weakness, his poorness, his humbleness at this time. I knew that six times we had repulsed his forces: thrice in Ireland, thrice at sea—once upon our coast, twice upon his own. Thrice had I served against him myself at sea, wherein for my Country's sake, I had expended of my own property forty thousand marks. I knew that where beforetime he was wont to have forty great sails, at the least, in his ports, now he hath not past six or seven. But for sending to his Indies, he was driven to have strange vessels—a thing contrary to the institutions of his ancestors who straitly forbade that,

even in case of necessity, they should make their necessity known to strangers. I knew that of twenty-five millions which he had from his Indies, he had scarce any left. Nay, I knew his poorness to be such at this time, as that the Jesuits, his imps, begged at his church-doors; his pride so abated that, notwithstanding his former high terms, he was become glad to congratulate His Majesty and send unto him. Whoso knew what great assurances he stood upon with other States, for smaller sums, would not think he would so freely disburse to my Lord Cobham six hundred thousand crowns! And, if I had minded to set my Lord Cobham awork in such a case, I would have given him some instructions how to persuade the King. For I knew Cobham no such minion that could persuade a King that was in want to disburse so great a sum, without great reason and some assurance for his money. I knew the Queen of England lent not her money to the States, but she had Flushing, Brill, and other towns, in assurance for it. She lent not money to the King of France without she had Newhaven for it. Nay, her own subjects, the merchants of London, did not lend her money, without they had their lands to pawn for it. And to show I am not Spanish—as you term me—at this time I had writ a treatise to the King's Majesty of the present state of Spain, and reasons against the Peace."

So spake Sir Walter Ralegh, summing up the whole question of policy which was occupying the minds of all men, and drawing attention to the great part which he had played in gaining naval supremacy for England.

He then went on to explain that the business which had brought him of late years so much in Cobham's company was of a private nature, concerning the improvement of Cobham's estate, and the purchase of a

fee-farm from the Duke of Lennox. He showed that Cobham was a wealthy and prosperous man, not one who could easily be moulded to treason from despair at his poverty.

Then another examination of Cobham was read, in which a second time he had exclaimed, "O wretch, O traitor." The trickery is absurdly patent. It resembles a game of chess in which one player as often as his black queen is taken, hastily substitutes another black queen in its place. At this juncture the foreman of the jury, Sir Thomas Fowler, was ill-advised enough to ask a simple question. "I desire to understand of the Court the time of Sir Walter Ralegh's first letter, and of the Lord Cobham's accusation." The Court looked at him in amazement, and Lord Cecil rose to his feet and immediately began a long and cunning speech. "I am divided in myself and at great dispute what to say of this gentleman at the bar. For it is impossible, be the obligations never so great, but the affections of nature and love will show themselves. A former dearness betwixt me and this gentleman tied upon the knot of his virtues, though slacked since by his actions, I cannot but acknowledge; and the most of you know it." The speech was cunning and involved. He made no mention of time; he harped upon his personal sorrow in being obliged to speak against a man whom he once loved; his personal loyalty, which was stronger than his affection had ever been, alone compelled him. Two dates were all that were wanted; they could not be given. So Cecil gave vent to his sorrow. Hypocrisy could go no further.

Directly that Lord Cecil had finished, Sir Edward Coke, the King's Attorney, continued his accusation, trying to turn Ralegh's great outburst about the state of

Spain to Ralegh's disadvantage, trying to prove it only another instance of his treachery. "Methinks it would have been better for you to have stayed in Guiana than to be so well acquainted with the state of Spain. As to the six overthrows of the King of Spain, I answer 'he hath the more malice' because repulses breed desire of revenge. As for you writing against the Peace with Spain, you sought but to cloak a Spanish traitor's heart," and more to the same effect.

When he had finished Ralegh rose to make his last claim on justice. "My lords," he said, "I claim to have my accuser brought here to speak face to face. Though I know not how to make my best defence by law, yet, since I was a prisoner, I have learned that by the Law and Statutes of this realm in case of treason a man ought to be convicted by the testimony of two witnesses. I will not take upon me to defend the matter upon the Statute of the twenty-fifth of Edward the Third, though that requires an overt act. But remember I beseech your Lordships, the Statute of the first of Edward the Sixth which saith: 'No man shall be condemned of treason, unless he be accused by two lawful accusers.' And by the Statute of the fifth and sixth of Edward the Sixth, those accusers must be brought in person before the party accused, at his arraignment if living!" He continued to instance other laws; he pointed out that Cobham was not only living but in the same town, in the same palace. He called to mind the case of Fortescue, who had condemned a woman to death on the witness of one man for the murder of her husband, and who could never forgive himself for the injustice when the servant of the man confessed at length to the murder. He drew instances from the Bible, and the Canon of God, and concluded with this appeal for

justice: "If then by the Statute Law, by the Civil Law and by God's Word, it be required that there be two witnesses, at the least, bear with me if I desire one. Prove me guilty of these things by one witness only, and I will confess the Indictment, I stand not upon the niceties of the law. If I have done these things I deserve not to live; whether they be treasons by the law or no. I beseech you then, my Lords, let Cobham be sent for. Let him be charged upon his soul, upon his allegiance to the King; and if he will then maintain his accusation to my face, I will confess myself guilty." The Court were at first taken aback by this unexpected knowledge of the law, but not for long. The Lord Chief Justice Popham, who played the strange triple part of assistant in the examination, of witness for the prosecution, and of presiding judge, explained that such a course was quite out of the question. "The statutes you speak of in cases of treason were found to be inconvenient and were taken away by another law. Those of Edward the Sixth are general, but were repealed by the first and second of Philip and Mary, which you have mentioned, which Statute goes only to the treasons therein comprised, and also appoints the trial of treasons to be as before it was at the Common Law. Now the twenty-fifth of Edward the Third makes declaration what the Common Law was. All is now therefore put to the Common Law. And by the Common Law one witness is sufficient and the accusation of confederates or the confession of others is full proof." And Mr. Justice Warburton went one further in making this point strong for the prosecution; he added the personal touch of insult, which is characteristic of the trial. "I marvel, Sir Walter," he said, "that you, being of such experience and wit, should stand on this point. For many horse-stealers should

escape, if they may not be condemned without witnesses. By law a man may be condemned upon presumption and circumstances without any witness to the main fact. As, if the King, whom God defend, should be slain in his chamber and one be shown to have come forth of the chamber with his sword drawn and bloody. Were not this evidence both in law and opinion, without further inquisition?"

The point was discussed at some length, and then it became time again to bring forward accusations of Cobham, which were accordingly read; this time also depositions of Copley, Watson, and George Brooke were also read to the effect that somebody had heard from somebody else how Cobham and Ralegh stood for the Spanish faction. Again Ralegh pointed out that this had nothing to do with his charge, and again asked, "Good, my Lords, let my accuser come face to face and be deposed." But that was not permitted.

Coke. "Now let us come to the words of destroying of the 'King and his cubs.'"

Ralegh. "O barbarous! if they like unnatural vilains spoke such words, shall I be charged with them? I will not hear it! I was never false to the Crown of England. I have spent £40,000 of mine own against the Spanish faction for the good of my country. Do you bring the words of those hellish spiders Clarke, Watson, and others against me?"

Coke. "Thou hast a Spanish heart and thyself art a spider of hell. For thou confessest the King to be a most sweet and gracious prince, and yet thou hast conspired against him."

The reading of Cobham's examination was continued, wherein Cobham said he had a book "written against the title of the king which he had of Ralegh, and that he

gave it to his brother Brooke, and Ralegh said it was foolishly written.

Coke. "After the king came within twelve miles of London, Cobham never came to see him; and intended to travel without seeing the queen and the prince. Now in this discontentment you gave him the book, and he gave it his brother."

Ralegh. "I never gave it him, he took it off my table. For I well remember a little before that time I received a challenge from Sir Amias Preston, and for that I did intend to answer it, I resolved to leave my estate settled, therefore laid out all my loose papers, among which was this book."

Ld. Howard. "Where had you this book?"

Ralegh. "In the old Lord-Treasurer's study, after his death."

Cecil. "Did you ever show or make known the book to me?"

Ralegh. "No, my lord."

Cecil. "Was it one of the books which was left to me or my brother?"

Ralegh. "I took it out of the study in my Lord-Treasurer's house in the Strand."

Then Cecil explained that after his father's death Ralegh was allowed to search in the library for cosmographical descriptions of the Indies. Again he referred to his great love for Ralegh, and said he thought it a little unkindly done on Sir Walter's part to remove the book without his knowledge. It was a book in manuscript on which the Lord-Treasurer had written, "*This is the book of Robert Snagg.*" Brooke burned it; the most was made of this incident.

Popham asked, "Wherefore should this book be burnt?"

Ralegh. "I burned it not."

Serjeant Philips. "You presented your friend with it when he was discontented. If it had been before the queen's death it had been a less matter, but you gave it him presently when he came from the king, which was the time of his discontentment."

Ralegh. "Here is a book supposed to be treasonable; I never read it, commended it, or delivered it, nor urged it."

Coke. "Why, this is cunning."

Ralegh. "Everything that doth make for me is cunning, and everything that maketh against me is probable."

The point was then raised about Captain Keymis, who had been rigorously examined. He was well known to be friendly to Ralegh. He proved, however, a faithful friend. Cobham said that Keymis came to him with a letter torn. But of this nothing came; Keymis had been too staunch to add anything to the truth, and the matter was dropped. More testimony of Cobham was then read concerning letters to Arabella, and again Ralegh insisted on Cobham's presence. "Let me speak for my life," cried Ralegh; "it can be no hurt for him to be brought; he dares not accuse me. If you grant me not this favour, I am strangely used. Campian was not denied to have his accusers face to face."

Popham. "Since he must needs have justice, the acquitting of his old friend may move him to speak otherwise than the truth."

Ralegh. "If I had been the infuser of all these treasons into him—you Gentlemen of the Jury, mark this, he said I have been the cause of all his miseries, and the destruction of his house, and that all evil hath happened unto him by my wicked counsel—if this be

true, whom hath he cause to accuse and to be revenged on, but on me? And I know him to be as revengeful as any man on earth."

Coke. "He is a party, and may not come; the law is against it."

Ralegh. "It is a toy to tell me of law; I defy such law, I stand on the fact."

Cecil. "I am afraid my often speaking (who am inferior to my lords here present) will make the world think I delight to hear myself talk. My affection to you, Sir Walter Ralegh, was not extinguished but slaked in regard of your deserts. You know the law of the realm (to which your mind doth not contest) that my Lord Cobham cannot be brought." The King's Attorney, Sir Edward Coke, took up the thread of his much-interrupted discourse, and this time he brought forward a witness, one Dyer, a pilot. Dyer was accordingly sworn, and delivered this evidence: "I came to a merchant's house in Lisbon to see a boy that I had there, there came a gentleman into the house, and enquiring what countryman I was, I said, an Englishman. Whereupon he asked me if the King was crowned. And I answered, no, but that I hoped he should be so shortly. Nay, saith he, he shall never be crowned; for Don Ralegh and Don Cobham will cut his throat ere that day come."

Ralegh naturally asked, "What infer you from this?" And the King's Attorney answered him, "That your treason hath wings." Ralegh had a convincing reply, "Why did they name the Duke of Buckingham with Jack Straw's treason, and the Duke of York with Jack Cade, but that it was to countenance his treason?"

The King's Attorney was worsted in this point; and accordingly Serjeant Philips came to his assistance by

repeating, as usual, the gist of Cobham's accusations. To which Ralegh answered, "If truth be constant and constancy be in truth, why hath he forsworn that that he hath said? You have not proved any one thing against me by direct proofs, but all by circumstances."

Coke was becoming more and more impatient. "Have you done?" he cried. "The King must have the last."

Ralegh. "Nay, Master Attorney, he which speaketh for his life must speak last. False repetitions and mistakings must not mar my cause."

Coke. "The King's safety and your clearing cannot agree. I protest before God, I never knew a clearer treason."

The Attorney's impatience grew so much that, in the words of one report, he sat down in a chafe and would speak no more, until the commissioners urged and entreated him. After much ado he went on, and made a long repetition of all the evidence; and at the repeating of some things Sir Walter Ralegh interrupted him, and said he did him wrong.

Coke. "Thou art the most vile and execrable traitor that ever lived."

Ralegh. "You speak indiscreetly, barbarously and uncivilly."

Coke. "I want words sufficient to express thy viperous treasons."

Ralegh. "I think you want words indeed, for you have spoken one thing half a dozen times."

Coke. "Thou art an odious fellow; thy name is hateful to all the realm of England for thy pride."

Ralegh. "It will go near to prove a measuring cast between you and me, Master Attorney."

Coke. "Well, I will now make it appear to the world

that there never lived a viler viper upon the face of the world than thou." And he proceeded to work up his speech to his last chief point of all—that was the production of a letter from Cobham, which he read. He interspersed his reading with exclamations of triumph. "I have thought fit to set down this to My Lords, wherein I protest on my soul to write nothing but the truth. I am now come near the period of my time, therefore I confess the whole truth before God and his angels. Ralegh, four days before I came from the Tower, caused an apple (Eve's apple, cried out the King's Attorney) to be thrown in at my chamber window; the effect of it was to entreat me to right the wrong I had done him, in saying, that I should have come home by Jersey, which under my hand to him I have retracted. . . . At Aremberg's coming Ralegh was to have procured a pension of £1500 a year, for which he promised, that no action should be against Spain, the Low Countries, or the Indies, but he would give knowledge beforehand. (Ah! is not this a Spanish heart in an English body?) He hath also been the cause of my discontentment; he advised me not to be overtaken with preachers, as Essex was; and that the king would better allow of a constant denial, than to accuse any."

"Oh! damnable atheist!" cried Coke. "He counsels him not to be counselled by preachers as Essex was; he died the child of God. God honoured him at his death."

Ralegh. "You have heard a strange tale of a strange man. Now he thinks he hath matter enough to destroy me; but the king and all of you shall witness, by our deaths, which of us was the ruin of the other. I bid a poor fellow throw in the letter at his window, written to this purpose: You know you have undone me, now

write three lines to justify me. In this will I die that he hath done me wrong."

Then Ralegh pulled a letter out of his pocket, which the Lord Cobham had written to him, and desired my Lord Cecil to read it because he only knew his hand. Cecil read the letter. "Seeing myself so near my end, for the discharge of my own conscience, and freeing myself from your blood, which also will cry vengeance against me, I protest upon my salvation I never practised with Spain upon your procurement: God so comfort me in this my affliction, as you are a true subject, for anything that I know. I will say as Daniel, *Purus sum a sanguine hujus.* So God have mercy upon my soul, as I know no treason by you!"

"Now I wonder," said Ralegh, "how many souls this man hath; he damns one in this letter: another in that."

Such were Ralegh's last recorded words before the verdict was given. He had said all that was to be said. He had stood his ground undismayed for many hours, though the chief men in England and the cleverest lawyers in England were set against him. He must gradually have realized that all were resolute to condemn him: he must gradually have realized that all his efforts were futile against such malignant opposition.

The King's Attorney alleged that the last letter was politicly and cunningly urged from the Lord Cobham, and the first was simply the truth. The Earl of Devonshire assured the Lord Chief Justice that Cobham had written the first letter of his own free will, uninfluenced by any hope or promise of pardon. A marshal was sworn to keep the jury private. The jury retired. In less than a quarter of an hour the jury returned and gave their verdict. The verdict was *GUILTY.* "Sir

Walter Ralegh," said the Clerk of the Crown, "thou hast been indicted, arraigned, and pleaded *not guilty*, for all these several treasons and for trial thereof hast put thyself upon thy country, which country are these who have found thee guilty. What canst thou say for thyself why judgment and execution of death should not pass against thee?"

And Ralegh, now doomed, made answer, "My Lords, the jury have found me guilty, they must do as they are directed. I can say nothing why judgment should not proceed. You see whereof Cobham hath accused me: you remember his protestations that I was never guilty. . . ." And later he said, "I submit myself to the king's mercy. I know his mercy is greater than my offence. I recommend my wife, and son of tender years, unbrought-up, to his compassion."

And then the Lord Chief Justice Popham rose to deliver judgment, which he prefaced by a pompous and insulting speech. "I thought I should never have seen this day, to have stood in this place to give sentence of death against you; because I thought it impossible that one of so great parts should have fallen so grievously. God hath bestowed on you many benefits. You had been a man fit and able to have served the king in good place—you have brought yourself into a good state of living. . . . It is best for man not to seek to climb too high, lest he fall; nor yet to creep too low lest he be trodden on. . . .

"You have been taxed by the world with the defence of the most heathenish and blasphemous opinions; which I list not to repeat because Christian ears cannot endure to hear them, nor the authors and maintainers of them be suffered to live in any Christian commonwealth. . . . You shall do well before you go

out of the world, to give satisfaction therein, and not to die with these imputations on you. Let not any devil persuade you to think there is no eternity in heaven. For if you think thus you shall find eternity in hell-fire. In the first accusation of my Lord Cobham I observed his manner of speaking: I protest before the living God I am persuaded he spoke nothing but the truth! You wrote that he should not in any case confess anything to a preacher, telling him an example of my Lord Essex, that noble Earl that is gone. Who if he had not been carried away with others had lived in honour to this day among us. He confessed his offences, and obtained mercy of the Lord; for I am verily persuaded in my heart he died a worthy servant of God. Your conceit of not confessing anything is very inhuman and wicked. In this world is the time of confessing that we may be absolved at the day of judgment. You have shewed a fearful sign of denying God in advising a man not to confess the truth. It now comes in my mind why you may not have your accuser come face to face; for such an one is easily brought to retract, when he seeth there is no hope of his own life. It is dangerous that any traitors should have access to or conference with, one another. When they see themselves must die, they will think it best to have their fellow live that he may commit the like treason again, and so in some sort seek revenge.

"Now it resteth to pronounce the judgment which I wish you had not been this day to have received of me.

"For if the fear of God in you had been answerable to your other great parts you might have lived to have been a singular good subject. I never saw the like trial, and hope I shall never see the like again.

"But since you have been found guilty of these

horrible treasons, the judgment of this court is, that you shall be had from hence to the place whence you came, there to remain until the day of execution; and from thence you shall be drawn upon an hurdle through the open streets to the place of execution, there to be hanged and cut down alive; and your body shall be opened, your heart and bowels plucked out, and your privy members cut off, and thrown into the fire before your eyes; then your head to be stricken off from your body, and your body shall be divided into four quarters, to be disposed of at the King's pleasure; and God have mercy upon your soul!"

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CHAPTER XVI

THE KING'S FARCE

Comments on Ralegh's fall—In the prison at Winchester—Ralegh begs mercy—His attitude explained—The King's own farce—Ralegh removed to London.

SO ended the worst and greatest day of Ralegh's life. The Lord Cecil was victorious. Ralegh was overthrown. But from despair so poignant that reason yielded to its sway and he was driven to attempt madly to make away with himself, he had risen to make a defence so admirable against his accusers that men who heard and saw him at the trial, heard him with wonder and watched him with astonishment. And well they might. The man whose judgment had saved the situation at Cadiz from the reckless inexperience of Essex, whose patience and courage had taken an expedition far up the dangerous unknown rivers to Guiana, whose insight had discovered the poet Spenser and made him known to the world, showed the same insight and courage and patience and judgment at this trial when he was standing for his life against the combined assault of the cleverest brains in England, combined by the hope of future favours from a new King to work his overthrow. When one tired or stumbled, another was prompt to take his place; but always Ralegh remained alert and ready and steadfast—alone.

Sir Dudley Carleton was present at the trial and

wrote an account of it to his friend, Mr. John Chamberlain. Carleton was at that time Secretary to the Earl of Northumberland. This is how he describes Ralegh's demeanour. "He answered with that temper, wit, learning, courage and judgment that save it went with the hazard of his life, it was the happiest day that ever he spent. And so well he shifted all advantages that were taken against him, that were not *fama malum gravius quam res*, and an ill-name half hanged, in the opinion of all men, he had been acquitted."

Carleton proceeds to tell his friend of two others who were present and who were the first to bring the news of the trial to the King at Wilton. One was Roger Ashton. He said that never any one spoke so well in times past nor would do in the world to come. The other was a Scotchman. He said that whereas when he saw Ralegh first, he was so led with the common hatred that he would have gone a hundred miles to have seen him hanged, he would ere he parted, have gone a thousand to have saved his life. And Carleton comments on this aptly enough: "In one word never was a man so hated and so popular in so short a time."

Dudley Carleton was quite right in saying an "ill name is half hanged." The trial was the merest farce. The judges were determined that Ralegh must be condemned, as soon as Ralegh was arrested. They knew that such was the King's will: and Ralegh's condemnation had become the King's will owing to the astute management of Cecil. There were many reasons for Cecil's line of action. Both James and he knew that there must be a large number of people in England disaffected to the new sovereign. It was advisable to open the reign by an illustrious example. Ralegh was a powerful man, whose powers Cecil knew and feared.

Moreover, Ralegh had original ideas about government which fitted ill with Cecil's conception of himself as the chief man in England under an absolute King. So Cecil for a long time had been playing upon the King's fears, knowing well the King's timorous nature. And then, when the time came, he showed his zeal for the King by delivering Ralegh into his power. His known intimacy with Ralegh, upon which he took every opportunity of harping at the trial and elsewhere, would lend bright colour to his loyalty to the King.

The judges are as little to blame as the system of which they were a part is much to blame. Here was Ralegh, whom Cecil, his friend and the first man in England, thought guilty of treason, just at a crucial moment in the history of the nation, when a new King was coming to the throne from another country. Naturally they would do their utmost to show their loyalty. The very vagueness and mystery of the charge increased their anxiety to condemn him. Fear, too, played a prominent part. Which of them could tell, if he showed any clemency to the prisoner, whether it would not be his turn to be charged next for complicity with the traitor? So they vied with one another in eagerness to crush Ralegh. Cecil was well aware of this; he had made his arrangements with infinite precaution. He was the first man in England, partly because he was his father's son, but chiefly because of his astuteness. His astuteness touched genius.

Ralegh was undoubtedly innocent of conspiring against King James. But that he received money from foreign powers is probable, and so laid himself open to the charge of treason. It is easy to exclaim against him for this. But to do so is an error of judgment. It was a common practice of the time. All the chief men

in England were in the pay of some foreign prince. It was part of an ambassador's duty to spend money in this way; the custom resembles the custom, prevalent in commerce, of giving presents to customers at Christmas. Lord Cecil is known to have received money from Spain during all the years that he held office. The custom has fallen into abeyance, not so much from the development of morality, as from the improvements that have come about in the means of travelling and communication. By knowledge man advances.

Ralegh was marked down by Cecil, and Ralegh fell. He knew that his career was at an end, as he passed from the palace at Winchester to the castle. His last request had been that his death might not be an ignominious one. His life was filled with great schemes of absorbing interest; he was at the height of his great powers. He had felt them in full play as he withstood the charges. Nothing availed him any more. As he sat in the prison-room of the castle awaiting the news and manner of his death, a sudden furious passion to continue the life, over which he had such mastery, seized and took possession of him. He must live. At any cost he must live. There was so much that he had not yet done. The immense vitality of the man rose within him and tortured him by its resistless strength. He must make one last effort for life; and his wife and child—they would be poor and shamed. He was famous throughout England for his pride. Pride and vitality fought within him. For now his only hope of reprieve lay in the King's mercy, and James liked the consciousness of power that comes from a great man's supplication. Vitality conquered. He supplicated the King for his life. He, who had dared death in all death's guises, could not wait for death to come slowly while still

there remained one chance of life. The spirit of life was too strong in him for that.

His letters to the King do not, as many have said, point to meanness of spirit; they bear witness to the indomitable vitality, which was his characteristic, and which would not allow him to rest. Be sure he knew, with that amazing intellect, well enough the stress of his future life; he knew well enough that it was no great boon for which he pleaded. His youth was gone; his possessions had been taken away; his name was sullied. He knew that the four walls of a prison would be his probable horizon, he who desired to explore new countries. But the spirit of life, which made him a great man, mastered him and forced him now to plead for his life like a little man, which he could never be. "No poltroon could have begged for life more abjectly than he did." So they write of him. But his letters sound the deep note of tragedy. They do not make Ralegh's name odious, but they stigmatize the name of the King for whose benefit they could be composed and upon whom they could take effect. Ralegh at last knew the man with whom he was dealing for his life, and he brought all his power of intellect to bear upon making use of the knowledge in this his ultimate emergency.

"I do therefore most humblie beseich my soverayne Lord not to beleve any of thos, in my particuler, who under pretence of offences to kings, doe easily work their particuler revenges. I trust that no man (under the culler of making examples) shall perswade your Majesty to leve the word 'mercifull' out of your stile; for it will noe less profite your Majesty; and becume your gretnes, than the word 'invincibell' . . . I do therefore, on the knees of my hart, beseich your Majesty to take councell from your own sweet and

mercifull disposition and to remember that I have loved your Majesty now twenty yeares for which your Majestie hath yett geven me no reward. And it is fitter that I should be indebted to my soverayne Lord, then the King to his poore vassall. Save me, therefore, most mercifull Prince, that I may owe your Majesty my life itt sealf; then which ther cannot be a greter dett. Lend it me att lest, my soverayne Lord that I may pay it agayne for your service when your Majesty shall pleas."

Slowly time passed, and little by little all hope of reprieve died in him. The spirit of life was, as it were, appeased at this his effort—this supplication—and allowed him rest. He wrote farewell to his wife.

"You shall receave, dear wief, my last words in these my last lynes. My love I send you, that you may keepe it when I am dead; and my councell, that you may remember it when I am noe more. I would not with my last will present you with sorrowes, deare Bess. Lett them goe to the grave with and be buried in the dust. And seeing it is not the will of God that ever I shall see you in this lief, beare my destruccion gentlie, and with a hart like yourself.

"First I send you all the thanks my hart cann conceive, or my penn expresse, for your many troubles and cares taken for me, which—though they may have not taken effect as you wished—yet my debt is to you never the lesse; and paye it I never shall in this world.

"Secondlie, I beseich you, for the love you beare me living, that you doe not hide yourself many dayes, but by your travell seeke to help your miserable fortunes and the right of your poore childe. Your mourning cannot avayle me that am but dust. . . .

"To what frind to direct thee I knowe not, for all mine have left mee in the true tyme of triall: and I plainly perceive that my death was determyned from the first day. . . . But God hath prevented all my

determinations; the great God that worketh all in all. If you can live free from want, care for no more; for the rest is but vanity. Love God and beginne betymes to repose yourself on Him; therein shall you find true and lastinge ritches, and endles comfort. For the rest when you have travelled and wearied your thoughts on all sorts of worldly cogitacions, you shall sit downe by Sorrow in the end. . . .

"When I am gonne no doubt you shalbe sought unto by many, for the world thinks that I was very ritch; but take heed of the pretences of men and of their affections; for they last but in honest and worthy men . . . I speak it (God knowes) not to disswad you from marriage,—for that wilbe best for you—both in respect of God and the world. As for me I am no more your's nor you myne. Death hath cutt us asunder; and God hath devided me from the world, and you from me. . . . And know itt (deare wief) that your sonne is the childe of a true man, and who, in his own respect, despiseth Death, and all his misshapen and ouglie forms.

"I cannot wright much, God knowes howe hardlie I stole this tyme when all sleep; and it is tyme to separate my thoughts from the world . . . I can wright noe more. Tyme and Death call me awaye. . . . My true wief, farewell. Blesse my poore boye, pray for me. My true God hold you both in His armes.

"Written with the dyeing hand of sometime thy husband, but now (alasse!) overthrowne.

"Your's that was; but nowe not my owne

"W. RALEGH"

It is sad to remember how the thought of some passages in this letter resembles those in the letter which he had written not quite seven years before to Lord Cecil on the death of his wife. "I believe it," he wrote then, "that sorrows are dangerous companions, converting badd unto yevill and yevill in worse, and do no other service then multeply harms."

The first week of December slowly approached. No hope came to the prisoner. But underneath the windows carpenters began to set up a scaffold: he was able to watch them at their work. Then he saw the two priests, Watson and Clarke, led to execution. They were very bloodily handled, writes an eye-witness; the same Carleton, who had written of the trial, for they were both cut down alive. He may have heard Clarke's wild-shouted words after he had been cut down. He saw Brooke beheaded. When it would be his own turn, he was still ignorant.

At last the Bishop of Winchester came to him, at the King's express order. The Bishop found Ralegh well settled for his conscience and resolved to die a Christian: but resolute in the assurance of his innocence. He would not yield to Cobham's accusations. The Bishop left him. Through the rain that was quietly falling Ralegh saw from his window on Friday morning Markham brought to the scaffold. He watched him take leave of his friends, watched him at his last devotions. While he was making ready for the executioner, the Sheriff was drawn aside: a man was whispering—one John Gib, a Scotchman. The execution was stayed. Markham was led away from the scaffold, and locked into the great hall of the castle. Ralegh must have wondered. Then he watched Lord Grey mount the scaffold, escorted by a troop of young courtiers. He had such gaiety and cheer in his countenance that he seemed a dapper young bridegroom. He, too, said farewell to his friends, made confession to his God, and prepared himself for the executioner. The Sheriff again came forward. He said it was the King's will for Cobham to die first. Lord Grey was led away to the great hall of the castle. Cobham was brought

on to the scaffold. "The Lord Cobham, who was now to play his part (writes the same eye-witness), and by his former actions promised nothing but *matiere pour rire*, did much cozen the world; for he came to the scaffold with good assurance and contempt of death." Again, just as he was about to lay his head on the block, the Sheriff came forward and stopped the execution. Grey and Markham were brought from the great hall of the castle back once more to the scaffold. Ralegh, at his window, must have wondered more than ever.

On the scaffold the Sheriff harangued the three men on the heinousness of their crimes, while the rain continued to fall: and he at last brought his harangue to an end with the words, "Now see the mercy of your prince, who, of himself hath sent hither a countermand and given you your lives."

The shouts of applause that greeted the unexpected finish, must have revealed the meaning of the strange scene to Ralegh. The shouting was taken up all through the town. Men loudly rejoiced in the clemency of the new King.

So weak men in authority love to display their power. James had carefully arranged this trivial cat's-play. Nearly it failed of its effect. He forgot to sign the pardon. In Winchester too the messenger, John Gib, the Scotchman, could not get near enough to speak with the Sheriff, but was thrust out among the boys and was forced to call out to Sir James Hayes or else Markham might have lost his neck. Ralegh was to have been executed on Monday. News of his reprieve was brought him after he had witnessed the singular farce on the scaffold, in which the King's feline cruelty was shown.

At Wilton too, where the Court was being held (the

plague still raged in London) the new King enacted another farce. He signed the death-warrants of Cobham, Grey, and Markham: Ralegh's sentence he withheld in case more light was thrown upon his case by confessions on the scaffold. He gave special instructions that no hope of pardon should be given to any of the prisoners. He kept his intentions from his most intimate ministers. Then he assembled the council, the day after the execution was to have taken place. He began a complicated speech, which puzzled his hearers, who were expecting a messenger every moment to bring news of the execution. "He contrasted the ardent and resolute spirit of Grey with the base and cowardly nature of Cobham; and then asked if it were at all consistent with kingly justice to execute the high-spirited Grey and to spare that pitiful creature, Cobham." He went on to point out the insolence of Grey who disdained to entreat for his life; the penitence of Cobham, who begged his life with humility. And so he continued until the minds of all the men who heard him were sufficiently muddled, and ended with what Edwards well calls, the triumphant tag, "So I have saved the lives of them all."

Again loud applause broke out in recognition of his clemency. But such applause, though it deafens the ears, does not last on in the hearts of men. His showily arranged mercy captivated the unthinking multitude. Wise men were not pleased that a King could stoop to such pettiness. It boded ill for the country that supreme power should be vested in a man who could behave in this manner. To them the action bore proof that the King was a little cruel man. But the people shouted for joy. The action made him popular: and when the Gunpowder Plot was dramatically discovered the following year, and the King's life was saved by a presentiment,

his popularity increased a thousand-fold. Who could doubt that in very truth King James was the Lord's anointed? Only as the years went by, dark events happened. Why did the Prince die suddenly in the prime of his vigorous youth? Who was Car that he should enjoy such favour? Why was Gondomar the Spanish ambassador held in such esteem? There was the scandal of Overbury's death. Men began to wonder and fear. Men heard the bitterness spoken in Troilus and Cressida or in Timon, and the bitterness began to find an answer in their hearts.

A week after the royal farce at Winchester Ralegh was removed to London: first to the Tower, then to the Fleet, and finally to the Tower, where he remained.

Thus Ralegh was overthrown, who, if the time had been ripe, might have proved a Mirabeau to England, and saved the country from Civil War and the destructive power of the Puritans, which eventually became necessary to purge England from the mischief of weak rulers with absolute power, kings who could not carry on the tradition of the great Elizabeth. In very truth, with Elizabeth, as de Thou said of Catherine, not a woman but royalty died.

CHAPTER XVII

THE LONG IMPRISONMENT

Ralegh's efforts to avert complete ruin—True greatness—Keeps in touch with life—First two years—The history—The first sentence—Reasons for incompleteness—James's dislike of the work—Its greatness.

SUCH things happened in actual life at the beginning of the seventeenth century. There was the same fantastic blending in life of melodrama and farce and poetry as was shown upon the stage. Beaumont and Fletcher, wild and exaggerated as they often appear, gave as faithful a picture of the life around them as Bernard Shaw gives of modern life; and in some ways they gave a more faithful picture, for they had no principle which they desired to inculcate, and a principle, though it is a fine stimulant, is apt to be a sad distortioner. There exactly lies the salient point of contrast between that century and modern times. Life then was confined and intense—with limitless possibilities. The pageant passed compact, and yet in gorgeous disarray. Art was informed by its positive spirit; glowed with animation at its touch. Life has become vast and voluminous; its horizon seems limited, as though for a time it had outgrown its strength, and was sprawling. The pageant crawls by in its interminable length, and yet in dully determined order. Art lives by battling against its dreadful hold—the hold

that slowly fastens and stifles with its long, persistent tentacles. The apathy of convention gradually settled, like an obscuring mist, but new knowledge is scattering the mist like a wind, and knowledge brings new responsibilities and fresh life and fresh light. The sun peers through the clouds, and the sun will lend warmth and colour to the pageant.

But such things happened at the beginning of the seventeenth century in actual life. That farce at the scaffold was the first manifestation that King James gave in England of his royal power.

Ralegh was taken from Winchester to the Tower on December 16. His future life was now dreadfully apparent to him. His lot was confinement. But not yet was his indomitable spirit of life dead. Crushed he felt and pinioned, but still he was obliged to strain every nerve to force all that could be forced from the life that henceforward awaited him. He could not submit in proud, becoming silence, as a fabled hero would undoubtedly have done, and as the code of present honour would have him submit—a code which, it is well to remember, is considerably assisted in its conduct by the press.

The only possibility of living with any pretence of decency lay in the favour of other men, who must on no account be permitted to forget him. It is unwise to praise the work which he accomplished in captivity, and to censure him for employing the only possible means in his power to get that work accomplished.

Again he put all his strength into the only task left him, and he succeeded in saving something from the ruin of his estates and the complete curtailment of his liberty, by renewed supplication. Being a man of vivid imagination, he entered so completely into the part

which was forced upon him—the part of supplicator—that his letters are the letters of the broken man that he wished to appear, and that his future work proved conclusively he was not. How little his spirit was broken is seen from the tremendous work which he undertook, and from the personal influence which he continued to exercise, and which his imprisonment did not seem to lessen. The scope of his activity was limited, but his activity did not abate.

His letters of supplication throw a light upon the nature of a great man. They show something of that strange quality which men call greatness. Ralegh was not a little man magnified by position or circumstances. He was a great man. Not in success is greatness apparent, not in attainment, but in effort, in vitality, in power of feeling and in control—but essentially in power of feeling. That power broke even the barrier of Ralegh's immense self-control—for a time only.

A great man does not walk exalted, like some demi-god to whom all things are easy; he knows dismay, he knows weakness, and all the legion of infirmities, but in spite of all, he wrests from life what life must yield him.

Ralegh had lost the Governorship of Jersey, the Patent of the Wine Office, the Wardenship of the Stannaries, the Rangership of Gillingham Forest, and the Lieutenancy of Portland Castle, from which together he drew an income of £3000 a year; men to whom he owed money fastened upon his estate at Sherborne. It was to save Sherborne from them that he did his utmost. Lord Cecil came to his assistance: "A secound effect of your Lordship's great favor was the preservation of my moveabells, which the ravenus Sherifs were in hand to have seised, and att my gates to have rifled, if your

Lordship's letters had not then cum to have countermanded it; which it also pleased yow, soon after, to procure me."

But Ralegh's possession of Sherborne was temporary and uncertain. He tried to save it entirely from the ruin of his fortune, that his wife and children might have a place in which to live. On this subject he writes continually to Cecil and Lord Cranborne. Sorrow sat by him as he wrote, and for long and long he could not resign himself to the prospect of captivity. "If I had a pardon, I may notwithstanding be restraynd or confined. If I may not be here about London (which God caste my sowle into hell if I desire, but to do your Lordship some kind of service) I shalbe most contented to be confined within the Hundred of Sherburn; or if I cannot be allowed so much I shalbe contented to live in Holland, wher, I shall perchance gett some imployment uppon the Indies, or else, if I be apoyncted to any bishope or other gentelman or nobelman, or that your Lordship would lett me keep but a park of yours—which I will buy from some one that hath it—your Lordship shalbe sure that I will never break the order which you shall pleas to undertake for me. And, if I bee any wher nire yow, yow shall find that in sume kind or other I shall do your Lordship service. For God douth know that if I cannot go to the Bathe this fall I am undun, for my health; and shalbe dead, or disabled for ever."

He wrote to Viscount Cranborne, imploring his aid to preserve this remnant of his fortune. "That life which cann be of no use to others and is now also weery of mee, at parting putts mee in mind of thos whom Nature and Charetie commands me not to neglect—a wife and a childe, and a wife with childe, whom, God knowes, have nothing else to inherite then my shame

and ther own misery. How to healp it or to whom to complain, I know not, whose fortune is over darck for the reason of the world to peirce . . . . And while I know that the best of men are but the spoyles of Tyme and certayne images wherwith childish Fortune useth to play—kisse them to-day and break them to-morrow—and therefore can lament in my sealf but a common destiney, yet the pitifull estate of thos who are altogether healpless and who dayly wound my sowle with the memory of their miseries, force mee in despite of all resolvednesse, bothe to bewayle them and labor for them. . . . For my own tyme, good my Lord consider that it cannot be calde a life, but only misery drawne out and spoone into a' long thride without all hope of other end then Death shall provide for mee; who without the healp of kings or frinds, will deliver me out of prison."

The humiliation of his position was forced upon his notice, for little men began to cheat him in little ways, and he could find no redress. The law knew him but as dead. He writes to Levinus Muncke, secretary to Lord Cranborne. . . . "I solde of late two peeces of ordenance to one Mr. Aloblaster, a marchant, whome you knowe. Hee that made the bargayne between us was one Thomas Scott, a broker,—one that I have done much for in my tyme, and one that, since I came back from Winchester, offred to sell his howse for me, if I wanted, with protestations too shamless to be dissembled. But having gotten my mony into his hands which Mr. Aloblaster sent mee and five pound waight of tobacco, hath sold the tobacco and reteyneth my money; finding mee now fitt for all men to tread on."

The man jackal is more impatient than his animal brother. For nearly two years Ralegh beat against the

prison walls, bruising himself, unable to give up hope that some measure of freedom might be his. His health failed. The plague broke out in the Tower. A woman with the plague on her slept in the next room to his eldest son, with only a partition of paper between them. Every trouble and annoyance fell upon him. Indifference could not come to him with its peace of apathy. He continued to live and to resent and to suffer. A weaker man would have broken down, would have given up this horrible struggle for existence against such overwhelming odds. Ralegh did not. And slowly he emerged from the struggle the conqueror even of these circumstances. He found work and worked. At first he obtained permission to turn a little disused hen-house that leant against a wall in the Tower into a laboratory. He made lotions and a medicine, which remained in constant use for very many years after his death. In modern times that alone would have been sufficient to give him the prestige of millions, and probably with a little discreet management, a peerage.

Few men have turned necessity to gain (that is the quality of the warrior in life) so greatly as Ralegh, such constricting necessity to such glorious gain. By sheer will power he kept in touch with the life, from which he was excluded. He wrote pamphlets on questions that were paramount in interest. His treatise on *The Prerogative of Parliaments* shows him in the vanguard of the fighters for liberty of thought, before that movement developed into a baser servitude. He wrote arguments against an alliance by marriage with Spain. He wrote at Prince Henry's request a treatise on the building and management of ships. In every sphere his presence was felt. Ladies were eager to use his lotions for the preservation of beauty. His medicine

was famous. The Queen sent an urgent messenger to the Tower when the Prince was dying, thinking to save her son's life by its means. But it was too late. The medicine only served to alleviate the agony of his last moments.

So Ralegh gradually came to arrange his life according to its new limitations. And it came about that those years in the Tower were far from being the unhappiest in his life. Ralegh, like his friend Spenser who had died tragically a few years before his imprisonment, knew well the value of Court life; and though he was not cut off from intelligent society as completely in the Tower as Spenser was in Ireland; yet he was cut off from much that had no attraction to Spenser. But in spite of his disgrace, and in spite of the work he desired to do, he must surely have found something of the same peace that comforted Spenser among the savage Irish, before their outbreak took from him his wife and home and all that was dear to him on earth. There is a strange analogy in what life offered to the two men. Lady Ralegh was allowed to visit and stay with her husband, until she offended Waad, who had become governor, by driving into the courtyard of the Tower in her carriage. Then the privilege was curtailed. Ralegh had many visitors. Men who had returned from travels came to tell him their experiences; men who were starting on some voyage, came to ask his advice and listen to his counsel. Ben Jonson visited him, and other scholars and poets. Certainly gossiping cheery Coryat, who amused himself by walking through all countries of the world, would come and recount his experiences. The Odcombian leg stretcher, as he liked to call himself, was hail-fellow-well-met with every man in London and in the principal cities of Europe. A

sort of standing amiable joke was Tom of Odcombe. "There is no man but to enjoy his company would neglect anything but business."

For two years he turned in prison as in a cage. Then he began to live. His mind expanded beyond the limits of body and his discomfort and of himself. Some sort of expression must be found for his mind's activity, and his means of expression were limited. As health came to him while he worked in his laboratory the proper expression for his mind's activity evolved itself. During the months of his retreat in Ireland, in his cabin as he made his way across the silent sea, he had read deeply and thought deeply about the past; in his active life at the Court and elsewhere he had known men who made history; and he had taken part in events which were history. He had seen and conversed with men whom civilization had not touched, he had known men of every country whom civilization had shaped to its culminating point; and now as he lived in the Tower from which he could see the ships sailing down the Thames to the unknown lands, from which he could look down upon the busy men of London, slowly there formed itself in his great mind a project. The project was to write the history of the whole great world, from which he was now cut off, from its very beginnings down to the days in which he was living, aloof from the life around. He determined to write the History of the World. That was the proper expression for his great mind's activity. He felt unconsciously that in so doing he could express himself. He set to work. He felt he had the grip of everything from the creation of the world to his own birth and tempestuous life of more than fifty years. We have burrowed more deeply into the mystery of things than the great Elizabethan, as sublimely

unaware of his ignorance, as we are of ours; he had complete confidence in his knowledge. We hesitate, we feel always on the brink of some great discovery, to which acquired knowledge is leading us. He explored continents, feeling limitless possibilities of the earth; and doubted not about the spiritual world. We know the limits of the earth; and explore these spiritual worlds, the mystery of existence. Therein lies the difference between two ages; therein without a boast, lies the progress, even, which has happened in the last three hundred years of man's existence. The adventurous whom the Unknown attracts are not drawn to explore the earth's surface; they turn towards the mystery of their own souls from which comes much profitless self-searching and a little eternal gain; they turn towards the mysteries of life and death and birth; they try to unravel the skein which men were then living tempestuously to entangle.

So Ralegh began his great work, greatly conceived and greatly executed, in the very spirit of the age to which he belonged—the age of Elizabeth, and to which King James's little favourites, Car and the rest, could never belong. Shut away from the bustle of the court and its splendour, now sinking to ignoble display; shut away from the voice of the nation, singing after the nation's deeds, as it had never sung before and has not sung since, he dreamed his great dream and found peace as he forced it to take shape and reality to his vision. From the creation of the world to the death of his own great Queen Elizabeth—everything that was—that was his subject; nothing less could satisfy him. He set the huge machinery of his idea slowly to work. His authorities were vast in number. He searched them all, and began to write. As he wrote the first sentences, he

felt the world lay before his ken, outstretched with all its strange happenings, the rise and the fall of dynasties, the rise and fall of kingdoms and nations. All were within his knowledge and grip. And above he saw the God, who had called the world into existence, and man into being. About that God he writes his first paragraph, untroubled by any simian suspicions. The immense power of the man overawes you as you begin his tremendous task. That is the first impression, and the impression thrills, as every supreme evidence of man's power must. Then you realize that his whole vision of the world is wrong—is a myth, and you see the futility of man's power—that is the second impression. The two are singularly vivid; they clash splendidly—and the issue? You see limitless possibilities of life for the brave man and the strong man, as they only can be seen, when two ideas—two sincerities—have clashed splendidly.

"And on through brave wars waged."

One is feign to cry out, when the dream of things has passed.

The first sentence of the History should be read aloud with a great voice in a cathedral.

"God, whom the wisest men acknowledge to be a Power uneffable and vertue infinite, a Light by abundant charitie invisible; an Understanding which itself can only comprehend, an essence eternal and spiritual, of absolute purenesse and simplicitie; was and is pleased to make himself knowne by the work of the World: in the wonderful magnitude whereof (all which Hee imbraceth, filleth, and sustayneth) we behold the Image of that glorie which cannot be measured, and withall that one and yet universal Nature, which cannot be defined. In the glorious Lights of Heaven, we perceive a shadow

of his divine Countenance ; in his mercifull provision for all that live, his manifold goodness, and lastly in creating and making existent the World universall, by the absolute Arte of his owne Word, his Power and Almightinesse ; which Power Light Vertue Wisdome and Goodnesse, being all but attributes of one simple Essence and one God, we in all admire, and in part discern, per speculam creaturaram, that is in the disposition, order, and varietie of Celestiall and Terrestriall bodies : Terrestriall, in their strange and manifold diversities : Celestiall in their beautie and magnitude ; which in their continuall and contrary motions are neither repugnant, intermixt nor confounded. By these potent effects we approch to the knowledge of the Omnipotent cause, and by these motions, their Almightie mover."

The History is based upon a fallacy ; but the History is written in great prose—the prose of Ralegh. Even when the subject comes from remote authorities on antedeluvian epochs, it is shaped and filled with perpetual life by contact with the great living personality of Ralegh. Error in life or art matters little. It is vitality that matters.

Mr. Edmund Gosse remarks that " the entire absence of humour is characteristic. . . . The story of Periander's burning the clothes of the women closes with a jest ; there is, perhaps, no other occasion on which the solemn historian is detected with a smile upon his lips." The remark is almost as astounding as that of Mr. Edwards, who, after a careful summary of the History, is obliged to say, " The three or four thousand pages of the *History of the World* contain, I believe, no line or word within which there lies the tiniest spark of prurient suggestion." Mr. Edwards is, of course, pleased at this ; but there is no reason for Mr. Gosse's lament. Ralegh did not write

with the continual bubble of humour which makes the Church History of Great Britain (of all impossible subjects) endeavoured by that inimitable old Thomas Fuller, one of the wittiest and most readable books in the language. Humour constantly occurs. Two instances in one paragraph are quite unforgetable. It is the fourth paragraph of the twenty-third chapter of the second book of the first part of the History (what portentous dimensions the book has!).

"Touching all that was said before of Phul Belosus, for the proving that Phul and Belosus were not sundry Kings, Joseph Scaliger pities their ignorance that have spent their labour to little purpose. Honest and painefull men he confesseth that they were, who by their diligence might have won the good liking of their Readers had they not by mentioning Annius his Authors given such offence that men refused thereupon to reade their Bookes and Chronologies. A short answere.

"For mine owne part, howsoever, I believe nothing that Annius his Berosus, Metasthenes, and others of that stampe affirme, in respect of their bare authority; yet am I not so squeamish, but that I can well enough digest a good Booke, though I finde the wordes of one or two of these good fellows alleaged in it: I have (somewhat peradventure too often) already spoken my mind of Annius, his Authors. . . . Neither indeed are those honest and painfull men (as Scaliger tearmes them, meaning if I mistake him not; good silly fellowes) who set down the Assyrian Kings from Pul forwards as Lords also of Babylon, taking Pul for Belosus and Salmanassar for Nabonassar, such writers as a man should be ashamed or unwilling to reade."

In such a passage even a student of Ralegh can see not only his lips smile, but his eyes twinkle with humour,

which is a characteristic of their solemn historian. And he ends the paragraph by recounting a singularly pertinent and amusing jest.

"Therefore the fictions (or let them be called conjectures) painted in Maps doe serve only to mislead such discoverers as rashly beleeve them; drawing upon the publishers eyther some angry curses or well deserved scorne. . . . To which purpose I remember a pretie jest of Don Pedro de Sarmiento, a worthy Spanish Gentleman who had been employed by his King in planting a Colonie upon the Streights of Magellan; for when I asked him being then my Prisoner, some question about an Island in those Streights which me thought, might have done eyther benefit or displeasure to his enterprise, he told me merrily that it was to be called the Painters Wives Island; saying That whilest the fellow drew that Map, his Wife sitting by, desired to put in one Countrey for her; that she, in imagination might have an island of her owne. But in filling up the blankes of old Histories, wee need not be so scrupulous. For it is not to be feared that time should runne backward, and by restoring the things themselves to knowledge, make our conjectures appeare ridiculous. . . ."

But the great work was never brought to an end. The first immense half of it, however, was finished, and that half is equal in bulk to about thirty modern novels. Many traditions survive as to the reason which caused Ralegh to discontinue his task. One is that Burr, the publisher, complained of the loss which the production of the first folio involved, and that Ralegh instantly laid hands on the heap of manuscript which lay on the table before him and, laying it on the fire, pushed it deep into the red embers with his foot, saying that no man should be the loser through his work. Another is (and this

commends itself to the imagination of M. Anatole France) that Ralegh saw from his window two men fighting in the courtyard below; that he asked the cause of the quarrel and that, when two eye-witnesses gave him two essentially different accounts, he was so overcome with the mystery that must ever surround all truth, that he thereupon destroyed the remaining manuscript of his History. These stories are interesting but not authentic enough to carry any weight against the reason which Ralegh himself gives for leaving his work unfinished, though they may possibly be reckoned among the discouragements which he mentions. For these are his words:

"Lastly whereas this book by the title it hath, calls itselfe, The first part of Generall Historie of the World, implying a Second and Third Volume; which I also intended and have hewne out; besides many other discouragements perswading my silence; it hath pleased God to take that glorious Prince out of the world, to whom they were directed, whose unspeakable and never enough lamented losse hath taught mee to say with Job *Versa est in luctum Cithara mea, et Organum meum in vocem flentium.*"

James did not like the History. He did not consider that Ralegh bated his breath sufficiently when writing of kings, who obtained their power, in his opinion, directly from a divine source. And he went farther in his dislike. For into what Ralegh had written of kings and men, long dead, he read criticisms against himself and his favourites; and these he could ill brook. James, like most cruel men, was sensitive, but he was "sensitive within alone, Inly only thrilling shrewd;" where others were concerned, he was, as is seen in his treatment of Ralegh, hard, "scaly as in clefts of pine."

James had no real cause to do this. Certain it is that Ralegh never consciously committed the offence. But certain it also is that he, like any other writer of his calibre, would write with greater feeling the account of some happening or some character, with which the circumstances of his own life brought into sympathy. And exactly because his life and his knowledge of men was profound and varied, his history gains in vitality. For always he keeps his relation in contact with life—that is of course to say, his own experience of life—by which each man is limited—and never does his work degenerate into a mere recital of facts. Only when he is weighing authority against authority is he lifeless, and almost necessarily lifeless, but even then—witness the passage quoted a little earlier in this chapter—he is not often dull.

All through the length of the history, passage after passage of deep wisdom and insight occur, so that his work is still a comment upon that greatest and most enthralling of all mysteries—life.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE LAST JOURNEY

Ralegh's influence with Queen and Prince Henry—Death of Robert Cecil—Rise of Villiers—Liberty—The undying endeavour—Anecdote—Preparations for expedition—Delays and uncertainty—The King's treachery—The expedition starts—Further delays—Storms—Captain Bailey—Ralegh's illness—At Terra de Bri—His son's death—Return of Keymis—Suicide of Keymis—Mutiny—The return.

RALEGH in the Tower managed to gain influence of a remarkable nature over the Queen and over Prince Henry, who was the idol of the nation. It availed him not, however. James was jealous of the immense popularity of his son, and feared his high spirit. Gradually the tall white-haired man in the Tower became the most talked of man in London. Round him centred the tradition of Elizabeth, which was looked back upon with vain regret. Men did not like the deference that was paid to Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador; they did not like the rise and supremacy of Car. They looked askance at Cecil. But Cecil and Car did not for many years lose their hold on the King, whom they treated adroitly. Nor were James's fear and hatred of Ralegh allowed by them to abate. Whenever the Queen or the Prince sued for favour towards Ralegh, they would not fail to point out the power and influence which caused such appeals to be made, and to play on the King's timidity. Moreover, in spite of Lady Ralegh's supplications and Prince

Henry's frequent entreaties, the Sherborne estates were handed over to Car at a price.

The position, however, suddenly changed. Cecil died. Car was sent to the Tower for complicity in the poisoning of Overbury. Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton died, the bitterest of Ralegh's enemies. Sir Ralph Winwood, who was kindly disposed towards Ralegh and an honest man, became Secretary of State. A new favourite of the same stamp as Car, one George Villiers rose to power, and he, for his own reasons, hated the Howards. Ralegh approached him in the usual way. He gave £750 each to his brothers, and obtained in consequence the regard of George Villiers.

Through all the years of his imprisonment Ralegh had continued quietly to urge—through the Prince, through the Queen, through Cecil—how foolish it was to keep imprisoned a man like himself, who could fill the treasury of England with gold from a mine in Guiana, of which he alone knew the site. He persisted always upon the wealth of Guiana, so that little by little it grew to be common talk. To Ralegh, as to Cecil Rhodes, gold meant power; but, more than gold, he desired the sensation of freedom on the wide sea, and the long journey to the unknown land. More than gold, he desired the attainment of the great dream which had become inextricably part of his life. That was his life's object, and nothing could keep him from any possible means of its fulfilment. The quiet labour in the Tower at his history and in the little laboratory only served to lull the pain of captivity, and gave scope to but a part of his great nature, though many men, and many by no means inferior men, have spent their lives in doing work less excellent and less valuable than Ralegh packed into the years of his imprisonment.

HENRY STUART Prince of *WALES*.

For twelve years Ralegh had been in prison. He was sixty-three years old when he regained his liberty. Most men would have been content to continue the quiet habit of work formed during his long imprisonment. Ralegh's spirit was, however, undaunted; not even habit could deaden his unconquerable vitality. His release had been gained that he might arrange and lead an expedition to Guiana. Indeed, he was still under the charge of a keeper, and his sole permitted business was to arrange the detail for the fitting out of the expedition—ships, men, supplies and so forth.

It would throw a light on all life if we could know what were Ralegh's feelings as he left the Tower; if we could know how long the first exhilaration of freedom held him, and when that exhilaration yielded to intense unutterable consciousness of the stress and the pain of life; for he must surely have felt as if he were beginning the whole business of life again, and many moments must have come even to Ralegh when he asked himself, "*Is* it *good* enough?" and looked back to the quiet of his room in the Tower with active regret —the room where he had dreamed and worked, had had the satisfaction of a persistent desire, and from which he had watched great ships making their way down the Thames to the sea. The same detail of his old life awaited him, in transacting the manifold business which he knew so well—countless interviews with innumerable men, endowed with the same amount of ignorance, or astuteness, or malice, or knowledge, or goodwill. In some ways the world must have appeared to him to have remained very dully the same; but its aspect must have changed amazingly. Different fashions were in vogue; different favourites caught the public eye; new faces showed everywhere. The

streets had been widened ; many were better paved. They were more crowded with carriages than they were twelve years before. New buildings had arisen, among which the New Exchange, close to Durham House, and the Banqueting House at Whitehall were the most notable. The first thing Ralegh did was to walk round London. In the twentieth century, an active man might, by clever arrangement of train and tube and electric tram, traverse the extent of London in a day without seeing any of the sights, and but few of the streets. Ralegh could see everything in London, poor walker as he was, in three or four hours, less than three hundred years ago. For London clung to the banks of the river which was the main way, and by which watermen thronged at countless landing-stages with innumerable boats and barges. It must have been a strange experience for Ralegh to notice the new fashions of the Court, to pass among men unknown, himself almost unheeded, who had been the great Queen's lover, and to see faces of new favourites, acclaimed at their passing through the streets. For he had become to the people little more than a name and a tradition ; he would be recognizable at his window in the Tower, but in the ordinary surroundings of life he would be regarded with surprise rather than recognition. And men who recognized would hesitate to notice his presence, not knowing whether suspicion might not cling to them of treasonable intentions if they appeared too glad at his release.

To this time belongs probably a story which Aubrey tells, and which, like other stories of that inimitable gossip, bears the stamp of truth. Its telling lightens the gloom that these first months of freedom, with their terrible realization of time gone, inevitably raise. Aubrey had it from his old friend, James Harrington,

who was well acquainted with Sir Benjamin Ruddyer, a friend of Ralegh's. In Aubrey's own delightful words the story runs as follows: "Sir Walter Ralegh, being invited to dinner to some great person where his son was to go with him, he sayd to his son 'Thou art expected to-day at dinner to goe along with me, but thou art such a quarrelsome affronting . . . (Aubrey has forgotten the exact word) that I am ashamed to have such a beare in my company.' Mr. Walter humbled himself to his father and promised he would behave himself mighty mannerly. So away they went, and Sir Benjamin I think with them. He sate next to his father and was very demure at least halfe dinner time. Then sayd he 'I this morning not having the feare of God before my eyes but by the instigation of the devil went. . .' Sir Walter being strangely surprised and put out of countenance at so great a table gives his son a damned blow over the face. His son, as rude as he was, would not strike his father, but strikes over the face the gentleman that sate next him, and sayd 'Box about; it will come to my father anon.' Tis now a common proverb."

The story is far too good to be false. Gossip needs no verification. It stands or falls unsupported by the props which the stern matter of history demands, like an authentic relic which has survived to please.

Meanwhile the business of the expedition went on apace. Ralegh had from King James a commission which empowered him to voyage "to places in South America, or elsewhere, inhabited by heathen and savage people, etc." The commission was very similarly worded to others which he had had from Queen Elizabeth, and Ralegh set no greater store by the clause which forbade him to attack the subjects of any European king,

especially of the King of Spain, than he had done before. Ralegh did not realize how much things had changed since his Queen ruled. He knew as well as every one else that the Spaniards in Guiana would not allow him to land and proceed quietly to the mine without a determined effort to stop his progress. But he did not know what a hold Sarmiento, the Spanish ambassador, had acquired over James, and how well-disposed James had become towards Spain. He did not understand that he was the last man in England who upheld the Elizabethan tradition, and that therefore he was the man whom Spain best hated.

One month after Ralegh's release Sarmiento wrote to the King of Spain warning him that another company was being prepared "for Guiana and the river Orinoco, which is near Trinidad, the prime promoter and originator of which is Sir Walter Ralegh, a great seaman. . . . I am informed that he will sail in the month of October with six or eight ships of 200 to 500 tons, some belonging to himself, some to his companions, all well provided. He will also take with him launches in which to ascend the Orinoco, and he is trying to get two ships of very light draught to take them as high up the river as possible. He has already been in the country and assures people here that he knows of a mine that will swell all England with gold." He urges the King of Spain to increase the navy and not to allow any merchant to sail without a proper convoy; and assures him that he in England will do all in his power to prevent the expedition. Sarmiento's power was very great.

Sir Ralph Winwood, the Secretary of State, was the only man in authority who was not in favour of a Spanish alliance. The King, as Major Martin Hume points out,

"was besotted with Gondomar and the Spanish power; Digby and Cottington were humbly negotiating in Madrid for the marriage of the Prince of Wales with the Infanta, and greedy Buckingham was bribed by the Spaniards to his heart's content."

King James played with Ralegh. The King wanted money, and wanted the friendship of Spain. There was a remote chance that Ralegh might obtain the money. In that case the money would be useful and Ralegh could be disposed of at his convenience, as an atonement to Spain. On the other hand, if the expedition failed, Ralegh could even more easily be disposed of, and his sacrifice would strengthen the tie between Spain and England. In either case James saw carefully to it that he should lose nothing and Ralegh everything.

The King's treatment of Ralegh is absolutely typical of him, and illustrates his treacherous weak nature with decision.

Men did not believe that Guiana was the object of Ralegh's journey. The whole scheme seemed incredible as affairs then stood. The general opinion was that the mine was the merest blind; for how could a sane man give, or a sane man accept, the conditions under which the search was to be carried out? Some thought that Ralegh was taking any opportunity that might lead to his freedom; that once he found the wide sea round him he would not again return to England where he had been so badly handled. Some thought that the expedition was intended not for Guiana but for a sudden raid on Genoa; others thought that Ralegh was going to succour the Huguenots at the King's wish. All the foreign ambassadors were uneasy as to the real intent of the voyage, and had long conferences with Ralegh and wrote long letters to their powers at home. Ralegh

alone, loyal to his traditions of Elizabeth, remained steadfast in his purpose.

James demanded from Ralegh the details of the expedition, the number of ships and men and arms, promising on his honour as a king (what more fragile pledge could he find?) not to divulge the secrets to any man. But Sarmiento, the Spanish ambassador, had the exact measure of James. He laughed at the story of the mine, and laughed at James for his childishness in thinking that a man who was no fool would be gulled by such a child's tale. The real motive of the expedition, Sarmiento assured James with laughing suavity, he and all the world knew very well was nothing else than to rob Spain at the distant source of her wealth while keeping her off her guard by the show of friendliness at home. James could not bear his ridicule and his assurance. He swore to Sarmiento that if a hair on the head of one Spanish subject were touched, Ralegh should be sent to Madrid in chains to be hanged in Madrid's chief square. That was not all. To prove that Ralegh's end was the mine, he handed over to Sarmiento all the secret papers of the expedition. So Sarmiento gained his purpose; he had the papers carefully copied and a special messenger was soon on his way to Spain bearing the copy to the Spanish king, as has been seen.

James was friendly with Sarmiento. A weak man likes to deceive himself. James wanted to be friendly with Spain, from fear of Spain's power. But if Ralegh could break Spain's power at the risk only of his life, James was quite content to accept the first place in Europe and then dispose of Ralegh. It was not his nature, however, to face anything and strike boldly. He kept up the illusion in his own mind that the mine was all he wanted, and all that Ralegh intended to make for;

PHILIPPVS III. DEI GRATIA HISPANIARVM ET INDIARVM REX &c.

and, like the weak creature he was, he allowed his personal dislike of Ralegh to hinder his plan, and his fear of ridicule to render the whole scheme ridiculous.

Meanwhile Ralegh's arrangements were proceeding, and gradually the new ship, the *Destiny*, which he had built, became a fashionable resort, even as his destination was the common talk not only of the Court in London, but also of many foreign Courts. Did England intend to support Spain and the Catholics, or the Protestant cause? The diplomacy of James was even more intricate and twisted than diplomacy is wont to be.

At length, at the beginning of April, Ralegh's small fleet of seven vessels weighed anchor, and sailed down the Thames. Even at the very moment of his sailing his purpose was not credited. Lionello, a Venetian resident, wrote to the Senate of Venice, "I know very well that Sir Walter Ralegh's only object in embarking in this enterprise was to free himself from his imprisonment. He would gladly change this scheme for any other. Many people know the fact as well as I."

But Ralegh was firm in his purpose. He was now an old man, if age be counted in years; he was still vigorous and alert, if age be counted by the measure of a man's vitality. Now, at the age when most men take to the fireside and friendly counsel, Ralegh was glad to undertake a desperate venture to win freedom and wealth for himself and for his family, prosperity and greatness for his country.

The seven ships in the Thames weighed anchor. They were: the *Destiny*, of 440 tons, carrying 36 pieces of ordnance; the *Jason*, of 240 tons, carrying 25 pieces of ordnance, of which the commander was John Pennington, "of whom to do him right," as Ralegh wrote, "I dare say he is one of the sufficientest gentlemen for

the sea that England hath"; the *Encounter*, of 160 tons, commanded at first by Edward Hastings and afterwards by Whitney, carrying 17 pieces; the *Thunder*, of 180 tons, commanded by Sir Warham St. Leger, carrying 20 pieces; the *Flying Joan*, the *Husband*, alias the *Southampton*, and the *Page*, all smaller vessels of 120, 80, and 25 tons respectively. The fleet was joined before it left the coast of England by Keymis in the *Convertine*, Wollaston in the *Confidence*, and Sir John Ferne in the *Flying Hart*. The *Destiny* was the flagship. It had been built at Sir Walter's own charge, and his son Walter was placed in the position of captain. Of the two hundred men on board, eighty were gentlemen volunteers, who were for the most part friends or relations of Sir Walter.

But months of valuable summer weather elapsed before the fleet left the coast of England. From the outset evil chance brooded over the expedition. Captain Pennington put in to the Isle of Wight with the *Jason* to obtain provisions, and had not the needful money. He accordingly was obliged to ride post haste to Lady Ralegh in London and wait while she went through the business of a bond, on which the money was raised. At Plymouth Captain Whitney had the same experience, and Ralegh was obliged to sell his plate to the silversmith; Sir John Ferne was also insufficiently supplied with money, and Ralegh borrowed £200 from two friends. The men began to feel that the expedition found no favour, and that their commanders were not trusted. In consequence, they grew uneasy and discontented. The delay lasted nearly three months, their enthusiasm began to abate, their resolution to weaken. The proper time of the year was passing.

While the fleet lay in Plymouth harbour Ralegh

issued orders for the conduct of his men to be observed by the Commanders of the Fleet and Land Companies. He ordained that divine service should be read in every ship twice every day: in the morning before dinner and at night before supper; or at least, if there be interruption by foul weather, once the day, praising God every night with singing of a psalm at the setting of the watch. He ordained special care to be taken that God be not blasphemed in the ships. The offender is to be admonished and then fined out of his adventures, and then if no amendment be found the matter is to be reported to Ralegh himself. For if it be threatened in the Scriptures that the curse shall not depart from the house of the swearer, much less shall it depart from the ship of the swearer. Two captains of the watch must be chosen, and they shall pick two soldiers every night to search between the decks that no fire nor candle-light be carried about the ship, nor that any candles be burning in any cabin without a lanthorn. "For there is no danger so inevitable as the ship's firing which may as well happen by taking of tobacco between the decks, and therefore forbidden to all men but aloft the upper deck."

The landsmen must be taught the names and places of the ropes in order that they may assist the sailors in their labours upon the decks, though they cannot go up to the tops and yards. And the sailors must learn the art of land-fighting, otherwise the troops will be very weak when they come to land without the assistance of the sea-faring men. No vessel should be pursued or disfurnished in any way, except under compulsion of absolute necessity, and then bonds shall be entered into for the repayal of what was taken. "You shall every night fall astern the general's ship, and follow his light,

receiving instructions in the morning what course to hold, and if you shall at any time be separated by foul weather, you shall receive certain billets sealed up, the first to be opened on this side of North Cape, if there be cause; the second to be opened at the South Cape; the third after you shall pass twenty-three degrees; and the fourth from the height of Cape de Verd." Minute instructions were given for signalling in case of distress or attack, or the sighting of a foreign vessel. In foul weather every man shall fit his sails to keep company with the rest of the fleet and not run so far ahead by day but that he may fall astern the admiral before night. He gave full instructions to the captains how to fight their ships. They are of exceptional interest. "In case we should be set upon by sea the captain will appoint a sufficient company to assist the gunners, after which if the fight require it, the cabins between the decks shall be taken down, and all beds and sacks employed for bulwarks. The gunners shall not shoot any great ordnance at other distance than point blank. An officer or two shall be appointed to take care that no loose powder be carried between the decks, or near any linstock or match in hand. You shall saw divers hogheads in two parts and filled with water set them aloft the decks. You shall divide your carpenters, some in the hold, if any shot come between wind and water, and the rest between the decks, with plates of lead, plugs, and all things necessary laid by them. The master and boatswain shall appoint a certain number of sailors to every sail, and to every such company a master's mate, boatswain, mate, or quarter-master, so as when every man knows his charge and place, things may be done without noise or confusion, and no man to speak but the officers. . . . You shall take a special

care for the keeping of the ship clean between the decks, to have your ordnance in order, and not cloyed with trunks and chests."

Then follow further instructions as to conduct, which forbid any man to play at cards or dice, either for his apparel or arms, upon pain of being disarmed and made a swabber. And whosoever shall show himself a coward upon any landing or otherwise, he shall be disarmed and made a labourer and carrier of victuals for the rest.

And finally a few essential points are mentioned for all fully to realize when God shall suffer them to land in the Indies, namely, the danger of sleeping on the ground, of eating unknown fruits, or any flesh until it be salted, of bathing in rivers. Especial stress is laid upon the necessity of treating the Indians with courtesy in order to win their help and friendship. "For other orders on the land we will establish them (when God shall send us thither) by general consent. In the mean time I will value every man's honour according to their degree and valour, and taking care for the service of God and prosperity of our enterprise."

On the 12th of June the fleet at last set sail. But as in the Islands voyage, just twenty years before, a great storm broke upon the ships and drove some back to Falmouth harbour. The bad weather raged for weeks and ended in a tempest that scattered the fleet and wrought fearful havoc among all.

Ralegh was forced to take refuge with his fleet in Cork harbour, where another long delay ensued. Delay was disastrous. It meant lack of confidence among the men. And well Ralegh knew that his authority had been lessened by the reports which had been industriously spread among his company that his commission being granted to a man *non ens* in law, took

from him both arms and actions: "it gave boldness to every petty companion to spread rumours to my defamation and the wounding of my reputation in all places where I could not be present to make them knaves and liars."

Delay meant expenditure of money which was desperately wanted; and what was most serious of all, delay meant loss of time, for only at the most favourable season of the year could these heavily equipped vessels hope to make their voyage with any likelihood of success, and only at the most favourable season could they hope to carry out the great task which awaited them at the end of their long voyage.

Ralegh was once again in Ireland, where he had started his career. Thirty-six years before he had written to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, now long dead, "I have spent some time here under the Deputy in such poore place and charge, as were it not that I knew him to be one of yours, I would disdayne it as much as to keepe sheepe." Here, too, he had spent those quiet months with Edmund Spenser, his friend, by Mulla's shore; nearly twenty years had passed since rebels burned Spenser's house to the ground and Spenser himself died of very grief. And here was Ralegh still living, still in quest of the dream's fulfilment, of which he had talked with the poet who was at rest, and still fretting at this last delay which was quietly ravelling away the fabric of all his hopes. Spenser had given the world his vision of the fairy realm into which his spirit had now passed; Ralegh had written the first half of his great History of the World, over which he desired to extend his country's dominion.

Richard Boyle was still at Cork. Boyle had bought Ralegh's estates in Ireland and they were flourishing

under his direction. Here as elsewhere Ralegh broke the ground from which others reaped a rich harvest. One Henry Pine of Mogelie was vexing Boyle as grievously as he had in years gone by vexed Ralegh with whom he was connected in industrial enterprises. So Boyle took advantage of Ralegh's visit to Cork to question him concerning the terms of a lease, and Ralegh spoke vigorously against the claims of Henry Pine, remembering well Pine's former bad treatment of him. He spoke so vigorously that in the following year, when he was reviewing all the many events of his great life, his words came back to him. He was then on the threshold of departure, and not wishing to think that any man had been harmed by him unjustly, he expressed a strong desire that the terms of this lease might be examined closely again. The action witnesses Ralegh's attention to justice and to detail.

But at last a favourable wind sprang up, and on the 19th of August, though late in the year for its enterprise, the fleet set sail from Cork harbour. Nothing could deter Ralegh from his last venture. The wide sea opened out before him once again, and far away the rich land of his dreams, where wealth was waiting for him and greatness for his country. Behind him he left his adventurous past life, and his soul was inclined towards this new adventure.

From Cork they set sail for Cape St. Vincent, and presently four ships hove in sight, to which Ralegh at once gave chase. The long delay made it dangerous to allow ships to pass unheeded, for by this time Ralegh must have known to some extent how much the Spaniards knew. Neither he nor any man could have suspected the scope of King James's treachery. The pursuit was long and stirring. Eventually the

strange vessels were overhauled. Their leader said that they were French vessels bound for Seville. His tale bore small signs of truth. His vessels were so heavily armed, their cut so questionable, that Ralegh's men affirmed that they were merely pirates, and should be treated as pirates. But Ralegh was not in a position to run any risk, which might bring down upon him the King's anger afresh. Accordingly he took the four ships with him for a length of time, sufficient to ensure the harmlessness of any intelligence which they might carry, and treated them with courtesy. The men grumbled. Why should they be expected to believe in a trumped-up story, when the vessels were full of Spanish apparel and Spanish merchandise and unmistakable pirates, and why should they be deprived of their proper spoil? To them Ralegh answered that it was lawful for the French to make prize of the Spaniards to south of the Canaries and to west of the Azores. "And if it were not so, it is no business of mine to examine the subjects of the French King." He bought commodities from them—oil, a pinnace, a fishing-net—to the value of sixty crowns, and let them go on their way. His scruples were well considered, but they did not tend to mollify the feeling of discontent which the untoward delays at the outset of the voyage had brought into existence among the men. The ill-feeling was increased when a little afterwards a Spanish vessel was encountered which had been pillaged by them.

On September 7, the fleet reaching the Canary Islands anchored off Lanzarote, and at Lanzarote an event of importance occurred which exposed the full treachery that was lying hid in the expedition, as well as in its false launching. There is small doubt that the

Spaniards on the island had received news of the fleet, and had been advised as to its proper treatment by Gondomar, the ambassador in London. Circumstances lent a specious cover to their conduct. For a band of Moorish pirates was known to be in the proximity of the Canaries, and their presence justified the hostile reception which awaited Ralegh's fleet. Nor would they easily believe that the vessels were English. They demanded that two officers should land unarmed, except with rapiers, and unaccompanied. Ralegh and an officer named Bradshaw landed and conferred with them in a plain, sufficiently open to prevent any secret treachery. Ralegh's demands were simple. All he desired was fresh water and food for his company. The governor of the island consented to supply him, and agreed to sell him the provisions by means of an English merchant, whose ship was at anchor in the harbour. "I sent the English factor according to our agreement, but the governor put it off from one morning to another, and in the end sent me word that except I would embark my men who lay on the seaside, the islanders were so jealous as they durst not sever themselves to make our provisions. I did so: but when the one half were gotten aboard two of our sentinels were forced, one slain, and the English factor sent to tell me that he had nothing for us, whom he still believed to be a fleet of the Turks who had lately taken and destroyed Puerto Sancto. Hereupon all the companies would have marched toward the town and have sacked it, but I knew it would not only dislike his Majesty, but that our merchants having a continual trade with these islands that their goods would have been stayed, and among the rest the poor Englishman riding in the road having all that he brought thither ashore, would have been utterly undone."

But sufficient had happened for the spy, Captain Bailey. He needed little evidence for his pretty tale, and having asked and obtained from Ralegh some ordnance and some ironbound casks, he weighed anchor in the night, and set all sail for England, where his employers would listen eagerly to his pretty tale, and pay him for it. It is sad to read all that Ralegh could write of him afterwards in his apology, "what should move Bailey to leave me as he did at the Canaries, from whence he might have departed with my love and leave, and at his return to do me all the wrong he could devise, I cannot conceive . . . I never gave him ill-language, nor offered him the least unkindness to my knowledge."

When the spy, Captain Bailey, arrived in England he despatched his account of the proceedings at Lanzarote to Buckingham, and Buckingham lost no time in acquainting King James. On October 22 Gondomar wrote fully to the King of Spain about the expedition, and Philip was more urgent than ever in pressing Sir John Digby and Lord Cottington and Lord Roos, who had been sent to Madrid by James to arrange the terms of the marriage between the Infanta and Prince Charles, that Ralegh might be immediately recalled and punished. King James was abject in his apology, and became more and more inclined to the sacrifice of Ralegh. But the spy Captain Bailey's account was too carelessly prepared; Cottington discovered divergences; Lord Carew, Master of the Ordnance, declared "those who malice Sir Walter boldly affirm him to be a pirate, which for my part I will never believe." Moreover "the poor Englishman riding in the road," whose name was Reeks, arrived on the scene and told a different story of the event. It was most unfortunate for the spy, Captain Bailey, who was sent to the Gatehouse at Westminster.

Tam Marti, Quam Mercurio.

The Hoble and learned Knight
Sr Walter Raleigh.
Ro: Vaughan sculp

His pretty story was proved to be an invention, but that mattered little subsequently; the invention served its purpose.

Meanwhile Ralegh's fleet had arrived at Gomera, "one of the strongest and best defenced places of all the islands, and the best port; the town being seated upon the very wash of the sea." Guns were fired at the ships at their first approach, and the ships answered. But as soon as Ralegh came up in the *Destiny* he gave orders that the firing should immediately cease, and sent a Spaniard, whom he had taken on a bark which came from Cape Blanc, to assure the governor of the town that he intended no harm of any kind to the subjects of the Spanish King. The governor replied that he had mistaken the fleet for the Turks who had sacked Puerto Sancto, "but being resolved by the messenger that we were Christians and English, and sought nothing but water, he would willingly afford us as much as we were pleased to take, if he might be assured that we would not attempt his town houses nor destroy his gardens and fruits." Ralegh gave full assurance, vowing to hang up in the market-place any man of his who should lay marauding hands on so much as one orange or a grape. Their courtesies did not end here. The governor's wife happened to be an English gentlewoman, and she sent Ralegh gifts of fruits, of sugar, of rusks, and saw to it that his stay at the island was agreeable. Sir Walter sent her presents of gloves and scent, and a picture of Mary Magdalen which hung in his cabin. These days which he spent at Gomera could have been the only time in this last great adventure of which he could have a pleasant memory.

The governor too was kindly disposed towards Ralegh, and not realizing how deeply his guest was

disliked and feared by the authorities at home, he sent a letter to Gondomar, the ambassador in London, in which he stated how exemplary had been the conduct of Ralegh's men.

The respite from the stress of the voyage was short. On September 24, three days after they left the Canary Islands, the sickness which had been prevalent among the men during their fortnight's stay, broke out with fury. On the evening of the 24th fifty men lay helpless on the *Destiny*. The other ships were not exempt. Two captains and a provost-marshal died on them. The chief surgeon and several officers followed on the 31st. As the plague-stricken ships made for the Brava roads a hurricane burst over them; the hurricane sank one ship and inflicted terrible damage upon the others. The storm abated, but the sickness continued. Four more officers died, and most of Ralegh's personal servants, so that, though he was himself suffering from a severe calenture, he was attended only by pages. The death of John Talbot grieved him sorely. John Talbot was one of those completely trustworthy old servants that a man of Ralegh's calibre is wont to have. "He was my honest friend," wrote Ralegh, "an excellent general scholar and as faithful and true a man as lived. I lost him to my inestimable grief." John Talbot had shared Ralegh's imprisonment of his own free will. He was as devoted to Ralegh as Keymis even himself. Pigott, the Lieutenant-General of the land service, died on October 13.

It is finely typical of Ralegh that in spite of the calamities which fell thickly upon him, the plague, the tempest, his own illness—he made and recorded observations which, as Edwards points out, furthered nautical science considerably.

On November 11 the fleet arrived at Cape Orange, which was then called Cape Wiapoco, and on the 14th they sailed into the harbour, made by the River Cayenne, which Ralegh calls Caliana. On this voyage every possible disaster had fallen upon the fleet, and yet the full business of the expedition had only now begun. Ralegh lay on a sick-bed, an old man, but he did not falter, though all the weight of arrangement was upon him. As soon as he arrived he wrote to Lady Ralegh. The bearer of the letter was one Captain Alley, who was suffering from an infirmity in his head, and obliged on that account to return home with all speed—"an honest, valiant man," according to Ralegh's description.

"Sweetheart, I can write unto you but with a weak hand, for I have suffered the most violent calenture for fifteen days that ever man did and lived. But God, that gave me a strong heart in all my adversities, hath also now strengthened it in the hell-fire of heat. . . . We are yet two hundred men, and the rest of our fleet are reasonable strong. Strong enough, I hope, to perform what we have undertaken, if the diligent care at London to make our strength known to the Spanish King by his ambassador have not taught the Spanish King to fortify all the entrances against us." He tells her that their son is in excellent health, "having had no distemper in all the heat under the line," and after recording the names of those who had died, and the disasters which had fallen upon the survivors, he ends the letter with this characteristic sentence: "To tell you that I might be here King of the Indians were a vanity. But my name hath still lived among them here. They feed me with fresh meat and all that the country yields; all offer to obey me." He would always rather be King even of the Indians than king only of his griefs.

The ship remained at anchor in the harbour of the river Cayenne until December 4. The sick men were landed, the ships were washed, fresh water was taken in; the barges and shallops which were brought out of England in quarters were put together, ready for the inland voyage to the mine. Ralegh reaped the full benefit of his courtesy to the Indians on his previous visit. Well they remembered him, as he wrote to his wife, and without their kindness it would have fared ill with the plague-stricken, tempest-tossed company. As it was, the Indians tended the sick with every attention possible, and helped the expedition by every means in their power. Ralegh was still too ill to walk. He was carried about in a chair, and in a condition in which most men would need all their strength to fight disease and death, he superintended the arrangements for the five ships which were to make their way up the great river to the mine under Captain Keymis.

In the five ships were five companies, each of fifty men. The Lieutenant-General of the land force, John Piggot, had died of fever on the way out; Sir Warham St. Leger lay sick without hope of life; and accordingly the command of the whole expedition was entrusted to Ralegh's nephew, George Ralegh, "who had served long with infinite commendation," but who was somewhat too young to have over the men the absolute authority which his position required. The five companies were separately commanded by Captain Parker and Captain North, "brethren to the Lord Mounteagle and the Lord North, valiant gentlemen, and of infinite patience for the labour, hunger and heat which they have endured;" by Ralegh's son, Walter; by Captain Thornhurst of Kent, and by Captain Chudleigh's lieutenant.

Ralegh himself stayed with the five larger ships at Puncto Gallo by Trinidad. He was constrained to do so, partly because his health would not allow him to undergo the hardships of the inland voyage, but principally because, a Spanish fleet being expected, no one would venture to pass up the river unless one whom they could trust remained at the base in charge of the big ships. Ralegh vowed that they should find him at Puncto Gallo on their return, dead or alive: "and if you find not my ships there yet you shall find their ashes. For I will fire with the galleons if it come to extremity, but run away will I never."

At last, on December 10, the five ships set sail, and Ralegh moved away with the main fleet. They made Point Barimy on December 15; on the 17th Point Hicacos, which is at the extreme south-west of the island of Trinidad; and on the last day of the year 1617 they anchored at Terra de Bri.

At Terra de Bri Ralegh began his slow period of suspense. The success of the whole scheme was hanging in the balance, the scheme which had been his life's chief business to fulfil, and he was doomed to inaction—to wait while others sought the final prize. Bitter must have been this waiting for Ralegh, bitter all the reasons that combined to keep him back, each in themselves paltry, and united, irresistible. For the first time a bodily ailment hindered him; old age was creeping on. For the first time the great commander found a lack of loyalty in his men; and that lack of loyalty had been generated and nourished by the treachery of his King. How could any man gain the confidence of his men, and have power over them, when he was still under sentence of death for treason? The men who served him were the scum of the earth, bent only on

plunder, such, verily, as an unpardoned man would attract to his service. But Keymis, Keymis and his own son—and the few valiant gentlemen—his heart lightened as he thought of them; they were brave and greathearted; they were loyal and steadfast. And George Ralegh, he was young, but nothing would turn him back. Still Ralegh waited. There was no sign of the Spanish fleet, which was expected, and for which he kept ever on the alert. Ah! why had His Majesty been pleased to hold them at so little value as to command him upon his allegiance to set down under his hand the country of his destination and the very river of entry; to set down the number of his men, the burthen of his ships, and the ordnance each ship was bearing! Why had it pleased His Majesty to hand over the document to the Spanish ambassador and break his royal oath?

Still Ralegh waited. No news came from the land force. He tried to break the monotony of suspense by searching out botanical specimens, and examining the chemical properties of the plants; he busied himself with the preparing of balsams, he who pined to be exploring the wealth of the land of his dreams. How could he trust any man's judgment but his own in such an enterprise, at such a time, when success meant prosperity for his country, wealth and freedom for himself and his family; when failure meant ruin, disgrace, and death? Yet Keymis, Keymis was faithful, and young Wat had his father's blood in him.

Still Ralegh waited. At length one day a little boat came in sight, and as it drew nearer it was seen to contain an Indian pilot and a sailor, who had been with the land force. His name was Peter Andrews. A letter was handed to Ralegh, a letter from Keymis. He broke the seal and read—

"All things that appertain to human condition, in that proper nature and sense that of fate and necessity belongeth unto them, being now over with your son, maketh me chuse rather with grief to let you know from the certain truth, than uncertainties from others. Which is, viz. that had not his extraordinary valour and forwardness (which with constant vigour of mind, being in the hands of death, his last breath expressed in these words, *Lord have mercy upon me and prosper your enterprise*) led them all on, when some began to pause and recoil shamefully, this action had neither been attempted as it was, nor performed as it is, with this surviving honour. . . . We have the governor's servant prisoner that waited on him in his bedchamber and knows all things that concerned his master. We find there are four refiners' houses in the town; the best houses in the town. I have not seen one piece of coin or bullion, neither gold or silver; a small deal of plate only excepted.

"Captain Whitney and Wollaston are but now come to us and now I purpose (God willing) without delay to visit the mine, which is not eight miles from the town. Sooner I could not go by reason of the murmurings, the discords and vexations, wherewith the sergeant major is perpetually tormented and tired, having no man to assist him but myself only. Things are now in some reasonable order, and so soon as I have made trial of the mine I will seek to come to Your Lordship by way of the river Macario. . . . I have sent Your Lordship a parcel of scattered papers (I reserve a cart-load), one roll of tobacco, one tortoise, and some oranges and lemons. Praying God to give you strength and health of body and a mind armed against all extremities, I rest ever to be commanded this 8th day of January 1617–1618.

"Your Lordship's
"KEYMIS"

His son was dead. His men were unruly and murmuring . . . but yet the four refiners' houses, and they were the best houses. Keymis had the governor's

servant in his hands, Keymis was within eight miles of the mine: gallant was the death his son had died. . . . (Would God he were there in person within eight miles of the mine!) He turned to Peter Andrews and the Indian pilot and began to question them eagerly. From them he learned the details of the expedition, since their start on the 10th of December. They came in sight of Point Araya on New Year's Day, and soldiers were landed before sunset. Ralegh frowned to hear that the Spaniards at the newly raised village—San Thome they called it,—were in readiness, and that an ambuscade had been prepared. Palomeque de Acuna had been forewarned by despatch from Madrid—Ah! the accursed delay and the still more accursed disloyalty of his King—Ralegh learned of the treachery and the disaster—slowly, for his heart and mind were heavy at the bad news of his son's death, and Peter Andrews was often interrupted in his confused story by the impatience of his admiral. But this is the gist of what had happened.

The Englishmen had encamped by the river bank. As soon as night fell on the land, Geronimo de Grados led his men from their ambuscade in front of the village down upon the English, who were taken completely at unawares. The common sort were panic-stricken, and had not the captains and some valiant gentlemen, among whom was one John Hampden (a staunch admirer of Ralegh and famous in history), set a valiant example, the whole company would have been cut to pieces. As it was, the Spaniards were at last driven back. They were driven right back to the village of St. Thomas, the position of which was not known. There the retreating men of Geronimo de Grados were joined by a fresh force under Diego Palomeque, the governor, and then the English were checked in their pursuit. They began to

waver. But young Walter Ralegh cried out cheerily to the pikemen, who were ahead of the musketeers, to advance after him, and waving his sword he led them to the fight afresh. Straight for Palomeque, the governor, he dashed and slew him. A hand to hand jabbing fight ensued, and muskets were fired at very close quarters. Young Ralegh was wounded. He paid no heed to his wound; with blood streaming from his wound he advanced against a Spaniard named Erinetta. But his quickness had lessened, as his strength ebbed from him. Erinetta swung his musket and the stock crashed on young Ralegh's skull: but Erinetta could not recover himself and he was immediately beaten to the ground. The Spaniards began to give way again. They fled. They fled for refuge to a monastery of St. Francis; the soldiers under George Ralegh and Keymis stormed the monastery and drove the Spaniards into the woods, and finally for refuge into their last stronghold where the women and children had been taken from St. Thomas. The battle was at an end. But the new governor, Garcia de Aguilar, was a man of resource. He gave orders that the survivors should form themselves into small bands, should harass the English whenever an opportunity offered, and fall upon all stragglers. While the funeral ceremony was being conducted over the body of young Walter, Captains Whitney and Wollaston arrived, and Peter Andrews and the Indian pilot were sent back, bearing their tidings to the main body at Terra de Bri.

That was all Ralegh could learn. That his son was dead; that the Spaniards were forewarned and keenly hostile; that his men were shaken.

The suspense became well-nigh intolerable for him as he settled to endure the second long period of inaction

—of waiting whilst with others lay the excitement of finishing for good or ill the scheme of his life's imagining. His son was dead. He could not bring himself to write the bitter news to his wife. He himself, an old man, still lived—and waited on the threshold of discovery. Keymis, however, was a trusted man, and nothing would hinder George Ralegh from his purpose. Keymis wrote that he was within some few hours of the mine. Perhaps even now Keymis was on his way back again, his ships laden with gold—and if gold were once found, there would be little difficulty in founding the colony which would become England's great empire across the seas. No old man could live to see that, but his son might . . . if his son were not already dead. He would wait to tell the bad news to his wife until he had some good news —the news of prosperity—that she might know his other son, Carew, though not of young Walter's mettle, would be able to continue his father's tradition.

Still he waited—day after day, week after week, month after month, but no fresh news came from Keymis, and no signs were anywhere apparent of a Spanish fleet. He went on with his botanical studies as much as his enfeebled strength would allow him. He studied the little plants that renew their life each year.

> Bow down and worship; more than we
> Is the least flower whose life returns
> Least weed renascent in the sea.

For Ralegh was a poet and so lost his personal sense of loss in the great mystery of things, which his personal griefs made more vivid to his mind. He was a poet and saw much that he could not express. The idea of Death fascinated him always. Death had slain the

young Prince, the hope of the nation; his friend, who would have helped him in his project; had left untouched the father, King James, who had betrayed him. And now Death had taken his son, who had only lived twenty-three years, and left him an old man—once again waiting, as he waited those long years in the Tower, waiting whilst others made or marred the fulfilment of his dream. Why was he thus often doomed to inactivity?

Still he waited. . . . At twenty-three, the age at which his son met death in a Spanish ambuscade on the eve of a great discovery, with a shining future before him, he himself was fighting in Ireland, an obscure soldier of fortune. The days of his past life appeared before him, his Queen's favour, his Queen's displeasure, the high mark which he had touched, the low place to which he had sunk, his captivity, his renewal of hope through the gallant Prince who was dead, his freedom, and this last tremendous effort to bring greatness to his country, prosperity to his family; and he was still waiting, while Keymis and George Ralegh took the last great step. He would tell his wife of their son's death when he could console her with the knowledge of what he had himself achieved. But no news came from Keymis. He could trust Keymis. He knew the man well and cared for him. All through his captivity who had served him as faithfully as Keymis? Who had believed in him so staunchly as Keymis? Who had helped him even so well? Perhaps Keymis and all his men were slain, or lost, or drowned.

Just before the middle of March Keymis returned. There was gladness on his face to see his master alive, but the gladness did not continue. He brought bad news. The faces of his men showed anger and discontent.

Keymis brought the worst news that any man could have brought to Ralegh after his long days of waiting. The scheme had failed, failed beyond all hope of recovery, and there was nothing to show for all the lives that had been thrown away, all the dangers and difficulties that had been surmounted.

For this is what had happened.

After the reinforcement of Captains Whitney and Wollaston, Captain Keymis took two boats further up the Orinoco in search of the mine, leaving the remainder of the company near St. Thomas. Their destination was Seiba, a village on the banks of the river within a two hours' march of the mine. The party made their way without mishap to the creek by the landing-place. But there, too, the Spaniards were in readiness. As the first boat neared the shore, a volley was fired, and nearly all the men in the boat were hit. His force thus enfeebled, Captain Keymis decided to return to St. Thomas for fresh soldiers. He found the company at St. Thomas harassed by sickness and continual attacks of the Spaniards; but they still had spirit enough to make one further effort. This time George Ralegh with three boats made his way right up the Orinoco to inspect the country from the point of view of colonization. He, too, was struck by its richness and beauty. He returned and found the company still more weakened by sickness and assault. The Spaniards made an attempt to burn the English camp. This so infuriated the men that they set upon St. Thomas and razed it to the ground. Captain Keymis discovered from the Indians that in the neighbourhood of St. Thomas also there were rich mines, which lack of labour alone prevented the Spaniards from working; but no other attempt was made to locate them or to test their richness. Then the whole

expedition returned. The one actual sign of their toils which they brought, were papers taken from the governor at the sack of St. Thomas, and these papers were documents from Madrid, proving how falsely King James had dealt with Ralegh.

Such was the report which Keymis gave to Ralegh. Ralegh was silent as he listened to the account of the overthrow of all his hopes. When the sad tale was finished, he asked Keymis why he had not obeyed his instructions, why he had not opened the mine and brought back some visible sign of its existence. Keymis gave his reasons at full length. There were not enough men to hold the mine; young Ralegh was dead; his master was ill, dying, nay, for all Keymis knew, he was dead. Why should the mine be opened that others might reap the benefit? But still Ralegh insisted, unwavering in dreadful firmness, on his question, Why had not instructions been obeyed? There were many interviews; there were long discussions that day and the next. Still Ralegh answered, "You should have obeyed instructions." "When I was resolved to write unto your Honour (wrote Ralegh to Sir Ralph Winwood, not knowing that his friend, the Secretary of State, had been dead for five months) he prayed me to joyne with him in excusing his not going to the mine. I answered him, I would not doe it; that if himself could satisfy the King and the State that he had reason not to open it, I should be glad of it; but for my part, I must avow it that he knew it and that he might with little losse have done it; other excuse I would not frame."

The position was a terrible one. Ralegh had been waiting for months, trusting to the loyalty of Keymis to execute his great enterprise; and it was Keymis's very loyalty to Ralegh which was the real cause of his failure;

for he would not open the mine unless he was quite sure that his master alone should benefit. Keymis was wrong. But he could not bear Ralegh to think that his conduct had been remiss ; he could not bear to think that he had injured the master for whom he would gladly have given his life. Nor could he make Ralegh understand even the reason of his action. "I know then, sir, what course to take," said Keymis, when he found he could not move Ralegh from his attitude of censure, and he went away "out of my cabin into his own, in which he was no sooner entered, but I heard a pistol go off. I sent up to know who had shot a pistol. Keymis himself made answer, lying on his bed, that he had shot it off because it had long been charged, with which I was satisfied. Some half-hour after this, the boy going into his cabin found him dead, having a long knife thrust under his left pap through his heart, and his pistol lying by him, with which it appeared that he had shot himself, but the bullet lighting upon a rib, had but broken the rib, and went no farther."

Such was the end of Ralegh's long period of waiting. The tragedy is great and real. He had trusted to Captain Keymis implicitly ; and Keymis, through excess of loyalty, had failed him. The only fault in either is that each was a little too true to his own character. Keymis's death shook Ralegh to the depths of his nature. Now more than ever he had need of men staunch as the dead Keymis.

For mutiny broke out among the men. Captains Whitney and Wollaston deserted. The men declared that they had joined the expedition merely to loot the Spaniards and plunder they would have. The mine had failed. Well, they would turn pirates and attack the Spanish fleet on its way home. They threatened to

throw Ralegh into the sea if he persisted in his resolution to return. He quieted them as much as lay in his power; but at last his great power was shaken and enfeebled, by imprisonment, by long sickness, by age, by the King's treachery, by disaster on disaster. He had still sufficient power to keep to his resolution and to force his men to some semblance of obedience, but in the old days no mutiny would have happened. Sulkily the men set sail for home, and Ralegh knew from the letters which Keymis had brought him from St. Thomas, that he was returning to disgrace and death.

From St. Christopher's, on this sad journey back, he forced himself to tell his wife the bad news of their son's death. He had no comfort for her. He was inured to grief. "God knows I never knewe what sorrow meant till now," he writes. "My braines are broken, and it is a torment for me to write, and especially of misery." And in a postscript, "I protest before the Majesty of God that as Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Hawkins died hart broken when they failed of their enterprize, I could willingly doe the like did I not contend against sorrow for your sake in hope to provide somewhat for you, and to comfort and relieve you."

The remainder of the voyage back was as disastrous as had been the outward voyage. Storms broke upon the ships and separated them. Some put in at Ireland; Captain Pennington, who had ridden back at the last moment to obtain money for supplies from Lady Ralegh, put in at Kinsale, and his ship was immediately seized. The *Destiny* arrived at Plymouth on June 21 alone; and at Plymouth Ralegh met his wife, and there he stayed until the second week of July.

In his last great enterprize he had failed, and he returned to give an account of his failure, and to face the

ignominy which his failure entailed. He was resolved, however, to make one last effort to clear his name, and to reinstate his family in some semblance of prosperity. He was an old man now, and one who had been buffeted by misfortune, but the spirit of life was still strong in him.

CHAPTER XIX

DEATH

His reception—Arrest—Journey from Plymouth—Stukeley and Manourie—The final scene.

GONDOMAR, the Spanish ambassador, had been active during Ralegh's absence to work his complete overthrow, but Ralegh remained some weeks at Plymouth before he knew the exact nature of the reception which awaited him.

Masterly was the way in which Gondomar handled James. He was about to start for Madrid on leave, when the news arrived from the townspeople of St. Thomas of the English attack. "Exaggerate as much as you can Ralegh's guilt and try to get the King to make a great demonstration," wrote Philip from Madrid. "Do not," he went on, "threaten him; but make him understand that I am offended, and that if a proper remedy be not forthcoming at once, we shall make reprisals and seize English property in Spain." Gondomar set about his task forthwith. He rushed into the royal presence crying with uplifted hands, "Pirates! pirates! pirates!" and urged James to remember his promise, that Ralegh should be sent in chains to Spain to be hanged in the Plaza of Madrid. This was no time for delay, for judicial examination: Ralegh should be despatched immediately on his landing, with all his pirate followers. But James could not, though he would,

act thus uncompromisingly. Ralegh was too considerable a man, and feeling towards him had changed very much since the time of his first trial when he was hooted through the streets of London as a traitor. There was a large party in the country who were averse to James's wish of an alliance by marriage with Spain. For forty years Spain had tried to humble England, and for forty years England had more than held her own. And now was the King to be bullied into sacrificing one of his greatest subjects, unheard, unjudged, at the bidding of Spain's ambassador? Moreover, James felt that he was losing the popularity which he had won at the beginning of his reign. His favourites were disliked. The personal influence of Gondomar over him was disliked. So James temporised—in his habitual way he temporized—so that he might, like the weak man he was, enjoy the sense of power which he felt as he slowly tightened the rope round Ralegh. "James wants peace and must be frightened," wrote Gondomar. "The English have changed their tone since I came and I have shown them that I will stand no nonsense." And his boast was amply justified.

Sir Lewis Stukeley was sent to Plymouth to arrest Ralegh and take possession of his ship and cargo. Ralegh had already started from Plymouth with his wife and Captain King when he met Stukeley, near the old stannary town of Ashburton on the edge of Dartmoor, twenty miles on his way to London. Stukeley made him return with him to Plymouth: for Stukeley was anxious to make as much as possible for himself out of Ralegh's cargo on board the *Destiny*, for he was vice-admiral of Devon.

Sir Lewis Stukeley was a Devon man and kinsman of Ralegh, for he was nephew to the valiant Sir Richard

Grenville. He did not maintain the traditions of his family or of his county. Ralegh stayed in Plymouth some ten days at the house of Sir Christopher Harris. He was not yet aware of the fate that awaited him, for Stukeley had only an order from the King and no warrant from the Lords of the Council. And Stukeley too was full of friendliness and soft words, partly to put Ralegh off his guard and partly because it was easier for him to be agreeable to a man like Ralegh, whom he could not bully. Lady Ralegh and Captain King were full of grave fears for Sir Walter. They begged him, valuing his life as they did, before everything else, to escape to France. They made all necessary preparations: a barque was in readiness just outside the harbour. Ralegh, still uncertain as to the best way of conducting the little business of life that remained to him, listened to their entreaties and actually went out in a small boat almost to the barque. But he turned back at the last moment, determined to face every danger that awaited him in order that he might clear his name in the eyes of posterity from the slur of false charges that he knew would be made against him. Exactly how that was to be compassed he did not yet know. Now, as before, in the troubled periods of his life, a kind of apathy, of weariness of life, closed in upon him; the apathy that comes from uncertainty, and which in his case preceded a great and definite action. His powers were slowly collecting for the last great moment of his life.

Towards the end of July a messenger arrived from the Privy Council, bearing an urgent summons to Stukeley to bring Ralegh to their presence without a moment's delay. "We command you," the message ran, "upon your allegiance, that you do safely and speedily

bring hither the person of Sir Walter Ralegh, to answer before us such matters as shall be objected against him in His Majesty's behalf."

The message was sent on July 21, and arrived four days later. On the same day, July 25, Ralegh began his journey from Plymouth to London, as Stukeley's prisoner.

Slowly in Ralegh's mind a plan of action matured. He knew that in London he had with the King's enmity little hope of life. It remained for him to clear his name of slander; his own life was now of small consequence to him: he was considering how best to leave a fair name and some means of decent living for his family. He saw that time was an essential to him. He must take care not to be hurried to London, hurried before the Council, and hurried to the scaffold before men were properly aware of his presence, and aware of the importance of the event. He must contrive to die greatly, as acquittal was beyond man's power. He knew that he was innocent, he knew that James desired his death, and that innocence was of small account when pitted against a King's wish. He lived long enough not only to see but to experience the bad consequences which he had foreseen of absolute monarchy under a weak King. Civil war fell on England, and the rule of the Puritans before the policy which he had thought out when Elizabeth was an old woman, became established. He brooded long over many things on that sad journey from Plymouth—over the roads which he knew so well. All the countryside was dear to him. He had done with it all now.

He passed Sherborne, where he had lived and been happy; he spent the night quite close to Sherborne at the house of his acquaintance Parham. It was a melancholy home-coming. What now remained of his

great hopes and his great doings? In the eyes of the world he had failed. But he must open the world's eyes to see his failure in its proper light.

At Salisbury, where they arrived the following day, his plan matured. It would not do to come nearer London and his judges unprepared and dreaming of his past life. Something still remained to be done. He must gain time. He must be expected too, that all might be ready to hear what he had to say. His device was brave and was pathetic. He determined to feign illness.

Now, at Plymouth he had met a man named Manourie, a Frenchman who was interested in chemistry, In Manourie Ralegh had the faith which a man is inclined to have in a fellow-craftsman on other matters than his craft. His confidence was unwise. Thinking over great matters, he was not sufficiently alert and not sufficiently distrustful. Nor is it certain that Manourie was false from the beginning. It is probable that he came to realize how dangerous a business he had undertaken, and, becoming alarmed, fell an easy prey to Stukeley's promises and suggestions.

Within sight of Salisbury Ralegh asked Manourie for a vomit. "It will be good," he said, "to evacuate bad humours. And by its means I shall gain time to work my friends and order my affairs; perhaps even to pacify His Majesty. Otherwise, as soon as ever I come to London, they will have me to the Tower, and cut off my head. I cannot escape it without counterfeiting sickness."

They arrived in Salisbury a few days before King James and the Court were expected. Ralegh strung himself to his pathetic part, and played it so bravely that Stukeley and the whole retinue were convinced

that a deadly sickness was approaching. On entering the house where he was to be lodged in Salisbury he staggered, as a man staggers who is overcome by sudden sickness, and fell against a pillar in the doorway, bruising his head. A delay was ordered. Lady Ralegh, with her retinue of servants and Captain King, was sent on towards London. Hardly had they started when a servant came to Stukeley's room, and said he, "My master is out of his wits. I have just found him in his shirt, upon all fours, gnawing at the rushes on the floor." Stukeley was amazed and perplexed. King James and the Court were daily expected at Salisbury, and his special instructions to hurry on the prisoner could only mean that the King was anxious not to be in Salisbury at the same time as Ralegh. And yet the prisoner must not be allowed to die. Moreover, pustules broke out all over Ralegh's body, and Stukeley could not have then known that they were produced by a cunning ointment which Manourie had given to Ralegh. Stukeley went to Bishop Andrewes, the bishop sent physicians to Ralegh, and they signed a certificate to say that he was not in a fit state of health to travel further. Ralegh's point was gained. He set to work and wrote his "Apology for the Voyage to Guiana," in which he stated his good case to the world.

It has been remarked, almost with astonishment, by some that Ralegh was not in the least ashamed of his action. But there was no reason why he should be ashamed. He decided in his own mind that to gain time was a necessity to him, and having done so he set about the business in the only way that he could, and he succeeded. Afterwards he was reproached for the lack of dignity he showed, and answered, "I hope it was no sin. The prophet David did make himself a fool,

and suffered spittle to fall upon his beard, that he might escape the hands of his enemies; and to him it was not imputed as a sin." Men like Ralegh have different values from the values of ordinary men; in that, perhaps, chiefly lies their greatness. Dignity is a thing which can very well be left to look after itself; the dignity which needs any careful bolstering is not in itself of great value.

Meanwhile King James and his Court arrived at Salisbury, and orders were immediately issued that Ralegh should continue his journey to London. It was probably about this time that Manourie learned the full importance of the fellow-chemist whom he was assisting, and became afraid. Hereafter Stukeley was informed of all the things which Ralegh said and did, and of many things doubtless which he had never said and never done.

So Ralegh continued his journey with his two false friends. As they neared London, the French resident in London, by name Le Clerc, and David de Novion, Sieur de la Chesnaye, met the party. De Novion was awaiting Ralegh's arrival at Brentford. He was empowered by the French minister to offer Ralegh means of escape to France. Men in authority at the French Court considered that such an enemy of Spain, whose head the Spanish ambassador desired to fall as a tribute to Spain's power over James, would be a useful man to save. But Ralegh appears to have listened with no great eagerness to their proposals. He was no longer anxious to continue his life in a strange country under a strange king, to whom he was indebted. He needed all his strength for the last achievement on which his heart was set—to clear his name from slanders, and he was not sure that escape was the best

means to his end; though he listened later to the entreaties of his wife and Captain King, to whom his very life was dear. But Ralegh must have listened with some pleasure: the anxiety shown on his account, for whatever reason, must have made it clear to him that now, at any rate, he could not be huddled away to the Tower and to his death, unheard, as he had feared. He desired publicity, that he might die, as he had lived—greatly.

On August 7 Ralegh reached London, and, instead of going to the Tower, was allowed to go to his own house, which was in Broad Street. Captain King was waiting for him. He had arrived some days previously, and had wasted no time. A barque was in readiness at Tilbury to take his master to France. Had Ralegh's whole mind been centred on escape, there is no doubt that he could have escaped, in spite of Stukeley's treachery. But his mind was divided. His own desire was to stay in England, and meet whatever his fate might be; but his desire was, no doubt, obscured by his wife's entreaties that he should seize any opportunity of life under any conditions. He allowed himself to be rowed down the Thames. Stukeley was actually with him, vowing that he wished his escape. A boat, however, was seen to be in pursuit. The men at the oars grew suspicious; they slackened their rowing, and at length turned back. At Greenwich Stukeley declared himself, and arrested Captain King and his master. Ralegh turned to Stukeley and said quietly, "Sir Lewis, these actions will not turn out to your credit," and to Captain King, from whom he took leave at the Tower gates, "You need be in fear of no danger. It is I only that am the mark shot at."

Once again Ralegh was in the Tower—the day he

TRAITOR'S GATE

entered it was August 10. Manourie received £20 for his part of the treachery, Sir Lewis Stukeley £965 6*s.* 3*d.*; the money was made up, for the most part, of the price of jewels which were taken from Sir Walter's person on this day of his last entry to the Tower. Among these jewels was the ring he had always worn since it was put on his finger by Queen Elizabeth.

The attempt to escape had been encouraged by enemies who wished to strengthen the case against Ralegh. That was clear enough to him, even before he was brought face to face with the Lords of the Council at his trial. They strove again, as they had striven before, to win the King's favour by maligning him. They affirmed that the whole enterprise to Guiana was a fraud, which Ralegh had invented to gain his freedom. For two months they considered the most plausible means of bringing him to execution. During that time Ralegh wrote letters to those in authority, and especially a noteworthy letter to the King, thinking that there might remain some spark of just feeling in him.

"If it were lawfull," he wrote, "if it were lawfull for the Spanish to murther 26 Englishmen, tyenge them back to backe and then to cutt theire throtes, when they had traded with them a whole moneth, and came to them on the land without so much as one sword amongst them all; and that it may not be lawfull for your Majesties subjects, being forced by them, to repel force by force, we may justly say, 'O miserable English!'

"If Parker and Mutton took Campeach and other places in the Honduraes seated in the hart of the Spanish Indies; burnt townes, killed the Spaniards; and had nothing sayed to them at their returne—and that my selfe forbore to looke into the Indies, because I would

not offend, I may as justly say, 'O miserable Sir Walter Ralegh!'

"If I had spent my poore estate, lost my sonne, suffred by sicknes and otherwise, a world of miseries; if I had resisted with the manifest hazard of my life the rebells and spoiles which my companyes would have made; if when I was poore I could have made my selfe rich; if when I had gotten my libertye which all men and Nature it selfe doth so much prise, I voluntarily lost it; if when I was master of my life, I rendred it again; if [though] I might elsewhere have sould my shipp and goods and put five or six thousand pounds in my purse, I have brought her into England; I beseech your Majestie to beleeve that all this I have done because it should not be sayed to your Majestie that your Majestie had given libertie and trust to a man whose ende was but the recovery of his libertie, and whoe had betrayed your Majesties trust."

It was to no purpose. Ralegh well knew by this time of what base fabric was the King's mind. The Lords in Council only delayed sentence because they could not determine on what grounds to execute their prisoner. At last, on October 24, Ralegh was told that sentence of death had been passed upon him. On October 28 he was summoned to Westminster, from his room in the Tower. A sharp attack of ague lessened the strength that still remained to him. He was old now and white haired as he stood before his judges. The Attorney-General read the writ against him and said: "My Lords, Sir Walter Ralegh, the prisoner at the bar, was fifteen years since convicted of high treason, by him committed against the person of His Majesty and the state of this kingdom, and then received the judgment of death, to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. His Majesty of his abundant grace hath been pleased to shew mercy upon him till now, that justice calls upon

him for execution. Sir Walter Ralegh hath been a statesman, and a man who in regard of his parts and quality is to be pitied. He hath been as a star at which the world hath gazed; but stars may fall, nay, they must fall when they trouble the sphere wherein they abide. It is, therefore, His Majesty's pleasure now to call for execution of the former judgment, and I now require order for the same."

Ralegh listened to this pompous mockery and said, when asked what he could say for himself why execution should not be awarded against him, "My Lords, my voice is grown weak by reason of my late sickness, and an ague which I now have; for I was now brought hither out of it." And the Lord Chief Justice answered: "Sir Walter, your voice is audible enough."

Indeed, there was little to be said by Ralegh, or any man, against a charge thus raked up from the past. The affair of this trial was a mere form, and Ralegh reserved his strength for his last great avowal at the supreme moment of his life.

He was taken away to the Gatehouse prison. Immediately the carpenters set to work to erect the scaffold. His execution was fixed for an early hour on the following morning. For on that day men's attention would be turned from the happenings at Westminster; and towards the City where the Lord Mayor's show would take place. Men's attention was not desired for the morrow's deed at Westminster.

Ralegh was a poet. A man cannot be a poet in his spare time. There is a realm which Beauty rules—that Beauty which Castiglione celebrated, and the understanding of which he made the last and chief attribute of his Courtier, with that realm Ralegh was in communion.

From it he drew strength for his life. Such communion does unfit a man for the business of life, but gives him power to cope with its difficulties by enabling him to look a little beyond them. It raises him above the pettiness of things, and makes him see more clearly because he sees things at their proper value and in their right proportion. This perception—this sensitiveness—made him suffer more acutely, but endowed him with the power of detachment, the power to rise above his personal griefs.

Ralegh was a poet. He expressed himself in his life in a way strangely akin to that in which he expressed himself in his actual poetry. He resembles some knight in a Morris romance in his adoration for his Queen, and in his love for his wife.

> But true love is a durable fire,
> In the mind ever burning,
> Never sick, never old, never dead,
> From itself never turning.

That spirit informed his life, and is linked with his every achievement. "Schönheit geniessen heiss die Welt verstehn." And one of the most memorable facts of the Russo-Japanese war was that the invincible Admiral Togo wrote home asking for plum trees in flower to be sent to him; he needed the strength which he drew from looking at their beauty. Castiglione was right. This perception of beauty is the last quality of the perfect courtier; from that alone can strength be gathered and stored for this strange struggle of life.

And now Ralegh had reached the last day of his life. Early next morning he was destined to solve the mighty problem with which poets and philosophers have always wrestled in vain—the problem which is the mightiest in life, which lends life colour and poignancy—

the problem of death. The excitement of knowing that in a few hours he would be taken into that great mystery must have been overpowering. He no longer needed consolation: fear was lost in eagerness to know. And a sense of relief came to him that he would be driven no longer to fight on in the long battle of life with the fierce energy that mastered him. He had sufficient experience to be a little weary of life; he had sufficient vitality to welcome death. He knew that he saw the sun set for the last time; that for the last time he saw the approach of night, the familiar faces of men, and all the surroundings of man's life. His consciousness was coming to an end. "Do not carry it with too much bravery," said his kinsman, Francis Thynne. "It is my last mirth in this world," answered Ralegh. "Do not grudge it to me."

For the last time? Yet who can tell? What is man's knowledge when confronted by the portentous fact of death?

Once more Ralegh was about to journey into the unknown, and his spirit thrilled with excitement at this his last and most adventurous journey. Dr. Tounson, the worthy Dean of Westminster, came to visit him in the little room which was allotted to him in the Gatehouse prison. "When I began to encourage him against the fear of death he seemed to make so light of it that I wondered at him."

His body was weak; his spirit was strong, Sorrow he was leaving behind him. And until the clock struck the hour of midnight he who was to meet death in the morning of that very day sympathized and strengthened his wife, who had many days more through which she must live.

At midnight Lady Ralegh left him, and for the last

time he began to set his affairs in order. He knew now how he could clear his name before the world. His spirit was so alive that he never doubted his power to die as he had lived—splendidly. He determined what he would say in the morning—quietly, resolutely—and having done so, still there was some time at his disposal. He opened the Bible that lay on the table and upon the first blank page he wrote—

> Even such is time! who takes in trust
> Our youth, our joys, and all we have,
> And pays us but with earth and dust;
> Who in the dark and silent grave,
> When we have wandered all our ways,
> Shuts up the story of our days.
> But from that earth, that grave and dust
> The Lord shall raise me up, I trust.

And now the time had come for him to face the high ordeal of public death, which was to be the last triumph of his great spirit. A goblet of sack was brought him and he made his way to the scaffold. A crowd was already assembled—waiting.

Ralegh walked to the scaffold with head erect, complete master of the terrible situation. He noticed an old man standing in the front of the crowd with uncovered head, and taking off the covering he wore under his hat, he gave it to the old man, saying, "You need this, my friend, more than I do." The crowd pressed upon Ralegh and the struggle to reach the scaffold made his body, still weak from the ague, breathless. It is in accordance with the irony of things that even this last path was not clear for him. At last he stood upon the scaffold, erect and smiling. The crowd listened for his death speech. The chief men in England were there to hear his last words and to witness his death. Ralegh began to speak. He said—

"I have had fits of ague for these two days. If therefore you perceive any weakness in me, ascribe it to my sickness rather than to myself. I am infinitely bound to God that He hath vouchsafed me to die in the sight of so noble an assembly, and not in darkness, in that Tower where I have suffered so much adversity and a long sickness. I thank God that my fever hath not taken me at this time, as I prayed to God it might not."

His voice grew weak. He feared that the nobles who were in the balconies would not hear him. So he asked them to come upon the scaffold. They consented and came. Each shook Ralegh's hand, as he thanked them for this last courtesy.

He continued his speech amidst the silence of the crowd. He defended himself against the charges of complicity with France, of disloyalty to the King, and then he said—

"For my going to Guiana many thought I never intended it, but intended only to gain my liberty,—which I would I had been so wise as to have kept. But as I shall answer it before the same God before whom I am shortly to appear, I endeavoured, and I hoped to have enriched the King, myself, and my partners. But I was undone by Keymis, a wilful fellow, who seeing my son slain and myself unpardoned, would not open the mine, and killed himself.

"It was also told the King that I was brought by force into England, and that I did not intend to come back again. I protest that when the voyage succeeded not, and that I resolved to come home, my company mutinied against me. They fortified the gun-room against me, and kept me within my own cabin; and would not be satisfied except I would take a corporal

oath not to bring them into England until I had gotten the pardons of four of them,—there being four men unpardoned. So I took that oath. And we came into Ireland, where they would have landed in the north parts. But I would not, because there the inhabitants were all Redshanks. So we came to the south, hoping from thence to write to his Majesty for their pardons. In the meantime I offered to places in Devon and Cornwall, to lie safe till they had been pardoned."

Ralegh now turned towards Lord Arundel, who was standing on the scaffold. "I am glad that my Lord of Arundel is here. For when I went down to my ship, his Lordship and divers others were with me. At the parting salutation, his Lordship took me aside and desired me freely and faithfully to resolve him in one request, which was, 'Whether I made a good voyage or a bad, yet I should return again into England.' I made you a promise and gave you my faith that I would."

Lord Arundel said in a loud voice, "And so you did. It is true that they were the last words I spake unto you."

And Ralegh went on: "Other reports are raised of me, touching that voyage which I value not. . . . I will yet borrow a little time of Master Sheriff to speak of one thing more. It doth make my heart bleed to hear such an imputation laid upon me. It was said that I was a persecutor of my Lord of Essex, and that I stood in a window over against him when he suffered, and puffed out tobacco in disdain of him. I take God to witness that my eyes shed tears for him when he died. And as I hope to look in the face of God hereafter, my Lord of Essex did not see my face

when he suffered. I was afar off, in the Armoury, where I saw him but he saw not me. And my soul hath been many times grieved that I was not near unto him when he died, because I understood that he asked for me, at his death, to be reconciled to me. I confess I was of a contrary faction. But I knew that my Lord of Essex was a noble gentleman, and that it would be worse with me when he was gone. For those that set me up against him did afterwards set themselves against me."

Ralegh knelt in prayer, asking the assembled crowd to pray with him. He rose and the executioner knelt before him to ask his forgiveness. Ralegh put his hand on the masked figure's two shoulders and said that he forgave him with all his heart. "Show me the axe," he cried, "show me the axe." Then he felt the edge with his thumb and approved of its sharpness. "This gives me no fear. It is a sharp and fair medicine to cure me of all my diseases." And presently, "When I stretch forth my hands despatch me." He turned to all the people and said in a loud voice, "Give me heartily your prayers."

His velvet cloak was taken off. He knelt in prayer. He laid his neck upon the block and stretched out his hands. But the masked figure in black, the executioner, was unmanned by the scene. He could not raise the axe. Again Ralegh stretched out his hands. The man remained motionless. Then Ralegh cried out, "What dost thou fear? Strike, man, strike!" It was necessary for him to give the man courage to kill him. At last the axe was lifted, and with two swift blows his neck was severed.

So lived Sir Walter Ralegh, and so he died.

"O eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none

could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised: thou hast drawne together all the farre stretched greatnesse, all the pride, crueltie, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words—*Hîc jacet.*"

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